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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, center, surrounded by soldiers wearing face masks, watches units of the North Korean army take part in a drill in North Korea on Friday. Independent journalists were not given access to cover the event depicted in this image distributed by the North Korean government.

KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY, KOREA NEWS SERVICE/AP

## North Korea fires 2 missiles

Move done in challenge to US, South amid COVID-19 struggle

By KIM GAMEL AND YOO KYONG CHANG  
Stars and Stripes

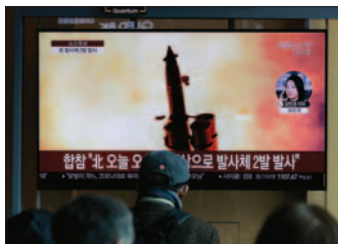
SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired two short-range missiles into the sea off its eastern coast Monday, South Korea's military said, in a new challenge to Seoul and Washington amid the growing coronavirus crisis.

The ballistic missiles were fired from a mobile launcher in a 20-second interval from an area near the city of Wonsan, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. They flew about 150 miles and reached an altitude of 22 miles, the JCS said.

The launch, the first in more than three months, and an artillery drill conducted Friday appeared to be part of the North's annual winter exercises, a JCS official told reporters.

It also occurred as North Korea, the U.S. and other governments are focused on fighting the rapid spread of the deadly new virus.

North Korea also has implemented strict measures against the virus, including sealing its borders and quar-



LEE JIN-MAN/AP

People watch a news report Monday at Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, on North Korea's firing of projectiles into its eastern sea.

antining foreign diplomats. Analysts said Pyongyang is likely seeking to project continued military strength.

SEE MISSILES ON PAGE 4

## Taliban attacks on Afghans could continue despite US peace deal

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban said they will resume attacks against Afghan government forces, just two days after signing a deal with the U.S. meant to end the war in Afghanistan. The group also kidnapped dozens of civilians in a province southwest of Kabul during the weekend, Afghan government officials said Monday.

The hostilities resumed after the signing of a U.S.-Taliban deal Saturday that would start a phased 14-month withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops, in exchange for Taliban promises to prevent terrorists from operating in the country, to stop waging war on the U.S. and its partners, and to initiate peace talks with the Kabul government.

The signing was conditioned on a seven-day partial cease-fire. A Taliban letter shared Monday with Stars and Stripes by a person with links to the militant group called on fighters to attack Afghan forces, but not U.S. or foreign forces.

"After signing the agreement, once again the Mujahideen (fighters) of the Islamic Emirate are advised to start their attacks against the puppet Kabul administration," said the Taliban letter, which the person provided on condition of anonymity.

The Taliban did not return calls Monday seeking comment, but news service AFP reported a spokesman for the militants said the group would resume "operations."

SEE TALIBAN ON PAGE 5

**A Taliban letter shared Monday with Stars and Stripes called on fighters to attack Afghan forces, but not U.S. or foreign forces.**

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## Struggling AT&T launches new TV service

Associated Press

NEW YORK — AT&T is launching a new internet-delivered TV service Monday as it struggles with a shrinking DirecTV satellite business.

The new service, AT&T TV, will have most of the same channels offered on DirecTV, but it'll come over the internet rather than a satellite dish. AT&T has been testing the service and is now making it available to anyone.

AT&T will send subscribers

an Android streaming-TV box to use the service. The free device will also come with Netflix and other streaming apps, the way Comcast's X1 cable box does. Additional boxes cost \$120.

The channel lineups and prices are comparable with what's available from DirecTV, but AT&T TV doesn't have NFL Sunday Ticket.

The company is trying to adapt to the shift to streaming video, as subscribers to traditional cable and satellite TV services fall. AT&T has an online package that

started as a cheaper service with fewer channels than a traditional bundle, but it is shedding customers after price increases.

Customers don't need to be AT&T internet or wireless customers to sign up, although there are discounted packages available. And the company is promoting the service by saying it won't cost against AT&T data caps.

By itself, AT&T TV starts at \$50 a month for a year with a two-year contract.

### EXCHANGE RATES

<b>Military rates</b>		
Euro costs (March 3).....	\$1.1440	Switzerland (Franc).....0.9562
British pound (March 3).....	€0.8741	Thailand (Baht).....31.42
Japanese yen (March 3).....	¥106.00	Turkey (Lira).....6.2301
South Korean won (March 3).....	₩1,172.00	
<b>Commercial rates</b>		
Bahrain (Dinar).....	0.3767	
British pound.....	\$1.2774	
Canada (Dollar).....	1.3365	
China (Yuan).....	7.0009	
Denmark (Krone).....	6.7165	
Egypt (Pound).....	15.6495	
Hong Kong.....	\$1.1127/0.8987	
Euro (Dollar).....	0.7810	
Hungary (Forint).....	302.85	
Israel (Shekel).....	3.4800	
Japan (Yen).....	107.56	
Kuwait (Dinar).....	0.3064	
Norway (Krone).....	9.3552	
Philippines (Peso).....	50.85	
Poland (Zloty).....	3.89	
Saudi Arabia (Riyal).....	3.7512	
Singapore (Dollar).....	1.3883	
South Korea (Won).....	1,191.46	

### INTEREST RATES

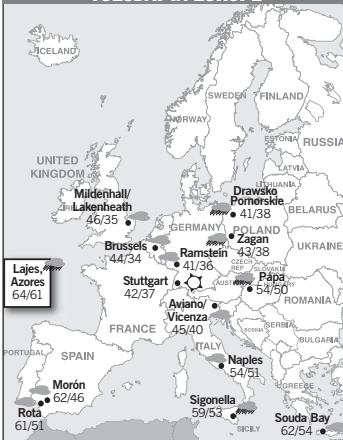
Prime rate.....	4.75
Discount rate.....	2.25
Federal funds market rate.....	1.58
3-month bill.....	1.26
30-year bond.....	1.67

### WEATHER OUTLOOK

#### TUESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



#### TUESDAY IN EUROPE



#### WEDNESDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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## MILITARY

# US soldier accused in beating jailed in Italy

By NANCY MONTGOMERY  
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — In a rare move, Italian authorities jailed a U.S. soldier before his trial on aggravated assault charges.

Carabinieri who work on Caserma Edlerle arrested Pvt. John Badger at his barracks last week for what local authorities said were violent and unprovoked attacks on Italian civilians and U.S. soldiers. They included one in November that left a 21-year-old man with a shattered jaw and lost teeth.

Five other 173rd Airborne Brigade soldiers remain under investigation but are not in custody.

"The U.S. Army respects the host nation's primary criminal jurisdiction in the

case against Pvt. John Badger," Maj. Chris Bradley, a 173rd Brigade spokesman, said in a statement Friday, adding that the military "will assist and cooperate with the Italian authorities."

Alessandra Bocchi, a lawyer for the injured man, said Badger's arrest was ordered by the local prosecutor due to the violence of the attacks, and was intended to prevent the suspect from fleeing Italy.

"We think jail is the right place for him," Bocchi said. "In light of the events, I consider it the only adequate measure. My client is facing delicate surgery on his face and teeth, and it is very likely that he'll never be the same."

The man has been traumatized by the "ruthless and unmotivated" violence, Bocchi said, and memories of it resurface

daily.

Badger and the other troops may have been responding to a racial slur, U.S. military officials have said. But Bocchi said her client did not say anything to the soldiers.

Another Italian man was also beaten in the Nov. 29 incident outside a bar in the city's old town. Italian media reported that Badger and several other troops are also alleged to have attacked a group of young men on Nov. 28, and two fellow U.S. soldiers on Nov. 30.

The incidents capped off a year that began with U.S. authorities looking to tamp down soldier misbehavior, "driven by a number of incidents involving U.S. personnel that reflected negatively on the Visazza Military Community," U.S. Army Garrison Italy said in January 2019, when

it began sending military police out with Carabinieri on late-night presence patrols to local nightspots.

Badger had been assigned legal counsel, the brigade's statement said, and the unit "will continue to provide care and welfare checks on him as per agreements with the host nation." Bradley declined to answer further questions on the matter.

Italy frequently allows defendants to remain free — or under house arrest — while a case works its way through the justice system, a process that can take five years or more for criminal cases.

No trial dates have been scheduled yet, Bocchi said.

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## US SEALs train with Serbian police force

By JOHN VANDIVER  
Stars and Stripes

BELGRADE, Serbia — The Navy SEALs kicked in doors and stormed into rooms as Serbian VIPs watched the operators maneuver alongside their own special police in a demonstration of counterterrorism force.

At the Serbian Special Anti-Terrorist Unit's Belgrade compound, a mock hostage taker was quickly eliminated as the troops showed close-combat skills.

The exercise Friday capped a nearly monthlong training effort by U.S. Special Operations Command Europe, which aims to make inroads in a region where Russian influence remains strong.

"It's a key strategic region in Europe and the U.S. has a lot of interests out here," the SEAL team leader said following the demonstration, on condition of anonymity for security reasons.

The team of Stuttgart, Germany-based Special Warfare Unit Two SEALs trained with Serbian and anti-terrorism forces as part of an effort to bolster ties.

But on Monday, shortly after the SEALs left, defense officials from Moscow were slated to arrive in Belgrade for high-level talks, underscoring Serbia's desire to strike a balance between the West and Russia, a historical ally.

Western officials remain concerned about Russia's influence in the region. In neighboring NATO ally Montenegro, the government blames Russian and Serbian agents for destabilization campaigns under the guise of religious protests, which Russia and Serbia have denied.

U.S. Department of Defense Gen. Tod Wolters, in testimony to Congress last month, said countries in the Balkans continue to be "primary targets of persistent Russian malign influence."

Last month, Serbia moved



U.S. Special Operations Command Europe

**A Navy SEAL prepares to clear a room during counterterrorism drills Feb. 28 in Belgrade, Serbia, where U.S. Special Operations Command Europe conducted exercises with local forces. The SEAL's face is blurred for security reasons.**

forward with a plan to acquire Russian air defenses, which Washington has warned could result in sanctions.

At the police compound in Belgrade where the SEALs were assembled, U.S. officials offered warm words about the ties between the two countries, but hinted at the political discord to be overcome.

Maj. Gen. Kirk Smith, speaking during a ceremony attended by Serbian military and government officials, said the countries are working "toward a friendship." Friendship comes when both sides are willing to "take risks for each other," he said.

"I look very forward to continuing the partnership ... to developing that in the future into a friendship," Smith said. Gabriel Escobar, deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy Belgrade, called Serbia a historically close partner dating back to World War I.

"We want that friendship. We want that partnership again," Escobar said. "I think through these engagements we can start to rebuild that traditional friendship."

For the U.S., working with Serbia in areas such as counterterrorism serves mutual interests, Smith said.

"Terrorism doesn't recognize borders," Smith said in a brief

interview. "If the Serbians stop it here then that's good for us."

Bringing in the SEALs for training also is a way to send a larger message of cooperation, he said.

"They work with Russia and they work with us," Smith said. "If we show them more opportunities to work with us as well and give them some options, that's building security. That's building stability and it's building opportunities to work together. It just gives them options."

Col. Spasoje Vulevic, commander of Serbia's counterterrorism police, said training with the SEALs was a way to improve his team's fighting and mission-planning skill set in a crisis.

"We can react immediately," Vulevic said. "It's one of the reasons for this kind of combined training."

For the SEALs, working with nonmilitary security forces also offered a rare opportunity.

"They have a very strong urban police skill set, which is something different than what the SEALs are traditionally involved with," said the SEAL team leader. "They have a strong reputation in Europe as a premier force. I found them extremely professional."

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## Navy security officer dies during Thailand port visit

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A U.S. Navy officer of the 7th Fleet died suddenly last week while on liberty from the command ship USS Blue Ridge during its recent port visit to Laem Chabang, Thailand, officials said.

Lt Cmdr. Ryan Platt, the security officer on the 7th Fleet staff, was playing golf at the Laem Chabang International Golf Course on Feb. 24 when he suddenly died, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley said Monday in an email to Stars and Stripes.

"CPR was performed, and emergency medical services transported him to the Vibram Laem Chabang Hospital, but he could not be revived," he said.

Officials are investigating the cause of death, Keiley added.

Platt, of Pritchett, Colo., arrived in Thailand on Feb. 23 aboard the Blue Ridge, which is homeported in Yokosuka. Since deploying in January, the ship has also made port visits to Okinawa

and Busan, South Korea, Keiley said.

Platt "represented the very best of 7th Fleet," 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Bill Merz said in a statement to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

"As our security officer, Ryan was a true professional and exceedingly passionate regarding the safety of the Fleet," Merz said in the statement. "He will be sorely missed."

Security officers lead "force protection efforts, antiterrorism training and predeployment certification programs" on vessels, according to a Navy job description.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to Ryan's family and friends," Merz added.

The 7th Fleet oversees all Navy vessels from the International Date Line to the India-Pakistan border and from the Kuril Islands to the Antarctic. Its leadership is based aboard its flagship, the Blue Ridge.

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## Power restored on Yongsan Army Garrison in S. Korea

Stars and Stripes

YONGSAN GARRISON, South Korea — Power was restored on Yongsan Army Garrison in Seoul on Monday after half of the base went dark over the weekend.

The blackout, which began Saturday, was on the portion of the garrison known as main post. It did not affect the other half, known as south post, where most residents and services are now located.

Critical facilities were powered by back-up generators as technicians worked to fix the problem. Soldiers who live in barracks on the main post were provided temporary housing on the south post, officials said.

"Kudos to the USAG Yongsan-Casade Department of Public Works for restoring the power at Yongsan Main Post!," the garrison said Monday on its Facebook page. It did not say what caused the outage.

Yongsan, which was the main U.S. base in South Korea for decades, is in the process of closing. Most military personnel have relocated to Camp Humphreys and other southern hubs as part of a consolidation plan.

Some 28,500 American service members are stationed in South Korea, which remains technically at war with the North after their 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.



## MILITARY

# Slain Yokota airman's family wants life sentence for killer

By SETH ROBSON  
AND HANA KUSUMOTO  
Stars and Stripes

TACHIKAWA, Japan — The family of a slain American airman wants harsh punishment for a Japanese woman who confessed to stabbing him to death at his home near Yokota Air Base.

Aria Saito, 28, of Tokyo, is charged with murder in the Nov. 9, 2018, death of Air Force Master Sgt. Nicholas Vollweiler, 35, who served as the security forces squadron's chief of standards and evaluation at Yokota. She is also charged with violation of Japan's Swords and Firearms Control Law.

On Monday, the fifth day of Saito's jury trial in western Tokyo, Vollweiler's mother, Laura Vollweiler, supported by her husband, Bernard, of Saylorburg, Pa., read a statement about the impact of their son's death on the family.

"You have stolen my son's life. You have stolen him from his

family, his friends he grew up with and his military family," she told Saito, who had bowed and apologized to the couple before they addressed the court.

Saito, who said she had been dating Vollweiler and helped him find his off-base home, admitted under questioning that she stabbed him with one of two kitchen knives she had brought.

She told the court she was upset after finding out that he was married and that she meant to kill Vollweiler the day he died. Others had testified that she was aware of his marital status all along.

Laura Vollweiler said that Saito beat her son, broke his possessions and released his old, retired military working dog in a park after removing its identification collar.

"You told him if he pressed charges on the police you would tell them he was holding you hostage and raping you," she said. "I believe it was you who left a message on my answering machine saying you were going to bury my

son."

Nicholas Vollweiler loved life, his friends and his career in the Air Force, Laura Vollweiler said. "He worked his way up the ladder and became a master sergeant. We were very proud," she said.

Her son's tour in Japan would have been his last in the military since he was approaching retirement after 20 years of service, she said.

"He chose to come back to Japan because he loved the Japanese culture and the peacefulness and kindness of the people here," she said. "Who would have thought that my beautiful son would have been murdered in this peaceful country?"

Saito doesn't tell the truth, Laura Vollweiler added.

"Thank God his comrades were called to his home that horrible night, because who knows what she would have done or said," she said.

The couple wants the court to impose a life sentence or at least



DIANA QUINLAN/U.S. Navy

**Nicholas Vollweiler, then an Air Force staff sergeant, works with a military working dog during controlled aggression training at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, in 2013.**

60-70 years since Nicholas might have lived that much longer, she said.

Prosecutors, however, asked the court for a 16-year sentence based on past cases with similar facts such as premeditation and breaking into the victim's home.

Defense lawyers, saying that

Saito suffers from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and acted on impulse, argued for a sentence of 10 years.

The verdict and sentence are expected on Friday.

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## Missiles: Coronavirus will likely stall N. Korean nuclear diplomacy efforts

### FROM FRONT PAGE

The U.S. and South Korea have decided to postpone joint military exercises that had been due to begin this week because of the rapid spread of COVID-19.

"North Korea might have carried out the launches in order to show they're maintaining their military capabilities in spite of the coronavirus crisis," Lee Ho Ryung, a research fellow at the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses.

South Korea raised the total number of COVID-19 cases to 4,335 on Monday, the biggest outbreak outside China, where the virus first appeared in December before spreading to dozens of other countries, including the U.S.

Duyoon Kim, an adviser with the International Crisis Group, said that the North's message was likely two-pronged — to show order on the domestic front, and "foreshadowing more provocations" in preparation for an expected "long confrontation" with Washington.

"COVID-19 will likely put nuclear diplomacy and Korean Peninsula security issues on hold for a while until it's contained," she said. "But the concern is if Pyongyang tries to take advantage of a vulnerable time for everyone, and COVID-19 already seems to be fueling geopolitical rifts in this region."

U.S. Forces Korea, which commands some 28,500 American troops on the divided peninsula, has restricted access to bases and banned nonessential travel for members of the military after a soldier and his wife were infected.



KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY, KOREAN NEWS SERVICE/AP

**State media KCNA said Saturday that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a military drill that simulated an attack on an island target.**

USFK spokesman Col. Lee Peters said that the command was aware of the missile launch and would continue to monitor the situation while consulting with its South Korean and Japanese allies.

"Additionally, USFK remains ready to defend [South Korea] against adversary or threat ... including COVID-19," he said.

The renewed military activity also coincided with the anniversary of the last U.S.-North Korean nuclear summit, which

broke down Feb. 28, 2019, after the two sides failed to reach an agreement.

"This behavior from the North is not helpful to efforts to ease tension on the Korean Peninsula, and we call upon Pyongyang to stop such actions immediately," the South Korean military said Monday.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un expressed frustration with deadlocked nuclear talks with the U.S. during a New Year's address and warned that his coun-

try would unveil a "new strategic weapon" soon.

He said that the communist state was no longer bound by a self-imposed moratorium on nuclear or long-range missile tests.

The North launched two rockets from a large-caliber launcher Nov. 28, but has so far avoided firing an intercontinental ballistic missile, which President Donald Trump has signaled would be a red line.

The launch also was a slap to President Moon Jae-in, who ap-

pealed for cross-border cooperation as the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in South Korea rose past 4,000.

North Korea, which sealed its borders shortly after the virus first appeared in China in late December, claims that it doesn't have a single case.

Aid groups have expressed concern about the ill-equipped, impoverished nation's susceptibility to the virus, however, and the situation has been difficult to confirm.

The State Department said earlier this month that it supported efforts to contain the spread in the North by working to approve exceptions needed to overcome U.S.-led economic sanctions aimed at punishing the nuclear program.

Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul, said that the North appeared determined to raise the stakes as South Korea and the U.S. face key elections.

He said that the U.S. and South Korean decisions to postpone their defense drills and to offer humanitarian assistance had "earned no goodwill from a Kim regime that sees little benefit in restarting diplomacy."

"Yet, these tests are less provocative than what North Korea is capable of," Easley added. "In the short-term, the worsening COVID-19 crisis will preoccupy all relevant governments, leaving little bandwidth for either military escalation or productive denuclearization diplomacy."

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# WAR ON TERRORISM



J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

An Afghan soldier guards a highway checkpoint in Logar province last May. The Taliban have resumed offensives against Afghan government forces, days after the signing of an accord with the U.S.

## Taliban: Deal does not require group to stop fighting Afghan security forces

### FROM FRONT PAGE

Top officials at the Pentagon on Monday indicated they were not surprised the Taliban would return to attacking Afghan forces, but they called on the group to gradually reduce violence across Afghanistan as measures in the new agreement are implemented.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the agreement calls for a gradual reduction in violence, while stressing an end to the nearly two-decade war remained in the distant future.

"This is going to be a long, winding, bumpy road," Esper told reporters. "There will be ups and downs. We'll stop and start. That's going to be the nature of this over the next days, weeks and months."

Afghan officials in Maidan Wardak province, which neighbors Kabul province, said 55 civilians were kidnapped by the Taliban in connection to the deal's provision pledging a large-scale prisoner exchange ahead of intra-Afghan talks.

"The reports we got from the district suggest that the Taliban abducted these people to swap them in the coming days for their prisoners," said Muhiullah Sharifzai, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Milley said the United States was evaluating the reports of the incident, telling reporters that he was not certain who was responsible. He also described expectations that violence would suddenly end across Afghanistan after the agreement Saturday as unreasonable.

"This is a significant step forward — this agreement. And it's going to lead to inter-Afghan dialogue that ultimately leads to a peace agreement," Milley said. "But to think that it's going to go to zero [violence] immediately — that probably is not going to be the case."

The U.S.-Taliban agreement calls for up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners and up to 1,000 pro-government prisoners to be released by March 10. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who was excluded from the deal negotiations at the Taliban's insistence, said any re-

leases should be discussed during intra-Afghan talks planned for next week.

The Taliban is also being blamed for kidnapping peace advocate Nazar Jan Nazari on Sunday in southern Uruzgan province, said Bismillah Watanost, spokesman for the People's Peace Movement. It was unclear whether the United States viewed the Taliban's actions as contrary to the agreement.

Esper said Army Gen. Scott Miller, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, would be largely responsible for such decisions on the agreement's status. The accord calls for permanent cease-fire talks but does not explicitly require the Taliban to stop fighting the Afghan security forces.

Miller said Monday that the U.S. expects the Taliban to be "serious" about their obligations in the deal.

"The United States has been very clear about our expectations — the violence must remain low," Miller said on Twitter through a spokesman.

U.S. military officials in Kabul referred questions to the Afghan Interior Ministry, which was not a party to the agreement signed Saturday.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo did not say what level of violence would constitute a violation of the agreement while being questioned Sunday by Margaret Brennan on CBS's "Face the Nation."

"Look, we can't get into hypotheticals about what it would take exactly, but there is a detailed set of commitments that the Taliban have made about the levels of violence that can occur, the nature of what's got to take place," Pompeo said. "It's going to be rocky and bumpy."

There is a "deep, complex, well-thought-out, multi-component mechanism by which we can observe and hold every member of the agreement accountable," Pompeo said, though officials have not disclosed the details of that mechanism.

Stars and Stripes reporters Corey Dickstein, Philip Walter Wellman and Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report. lawrence.jp@stripes.com

# Turkish president hopes to broker Syria truce in Moscow

BY BASSEM MROUE  
Associated Press

BEIRUT — Turkey's president Monday said he hopes to broker a cease-fire in Syria later this week in Moscow when he meets with his Russian counterpart, after growing alarm over direct clashes in northwest Syria between Turkish troops and Syrian forces backed by Russia.

The Syrian government's months-long offensive into Idlib province, the last rebel-held area in the country, has sparked one of the war's worst humanitarian crises. Almost one million Syrian civilians have fled north toward the sealed Turkish border.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has sent thousands of troops into Idlib to support the opposition fighters holed up there, but hasn't been able to stop the government offensive.

Erdogan, speaking Monday to a gathering of his ruling party in the Turkish capital, said he hoped to reach a cease-fire deal for Idlib when he meets Vladimir Putin on Thursday to "prevent further bloodshed." He did not elaborate. In Moscow, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed Thursday's meeting.

Direct combat between Turkish and Syrian forces had been rare throughout the nine-year civil war.

Russia tipped balance in Syrian President Bashar Assad's favor after it joined the conflict on his side in September 2015. Turkey and Russia have been closely coordinating over the situation in Syria in recent years, even as Turkey continues to heavily back the Syrian opposition.

Russia remained largely on the sidelines over the weekend, even as a Turkish-led counter-offensive in Idlib blunted and in some cases reversed Syrian government advances.

However, on Monday, Syrian government forces and their allies retook the key northwestern town of Saraqeb, just days after taking it — and then losing it again — to rebel forces, according to pro-government media and an opposition war monitor. The town lies on the main highway linking Syria's two

largest cities, Damascus and Aleppo, also known as the M5, making it key to who controls the country.

Nearly fighting continued, however, and as a reporter for Syrian state TV was speaking live from inside Saraqeb, a shell exploded behind him causing a mushroom cloud of dust. The journalist and his crew rushed for cover in a nearby building.

Later Monday, Russia said its military police units deployed to Saraqeb "given its importance for ensuring security and uninterrupted transit of vehicles and civilians." The move appeared to be an attempt to secure control of the town once and for all.

Fighting has worsened over the past few days, after Syrian shelling killed more than 30 Turkish soldiers in Idlib. Turkey responded with drone attacks and shelling that killed more than 90 Syrian troops and allied gunmen. The Turkish air force also shot down two Syrian warplanes after Syria's air defenses shot down one of its drones. The Syrian pilots ejected safely.

Turkey lost 54 soldiers in Syria in February, including 33 killed Thursday in a single airstrike.

Outraged, Erdogan then announced his country's western borders with Europe were open Saturday for the thousands of migrants and refugees wanting to cross, as he sought to pressure the EU to help Turkey handle the fallout from the war in Syria. Thousands of migrants have since converged to Turkey's land and sea borders with Greece, trying to enter Europe.

Syria's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the international community should prevent Erdogan from taking advantage of the "suffering of Syrians in order to blackmail European countries by releasing waves of migrants toward Europe."

On the southern edge of Idlib, intense fighting was reported near the village of Kafranbel, which Syrian troops captured last week, opposition activists said.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said troops captured the town under the cover of Russian airstrikes.

## Officials: Yemen rebels have seized control of strategic northern city

BY MAGGIE MICHAEL  
AND SAMY MAGDY  
Associated Press

CAIRO — Yemen's Houthi rebels wrested control of the strategic northern city of Hazm, officials said on both sides of the conflict said Sunday, a major blow to the internationally recognized government backed by Saudi Arabia.

Capturing the capital of Jawf province after weeks of fighting could pave the way for the rebels to move toward the central province of Marib, one of the shrinking safe spots for those opposing the Houthis in northern Yemen. It also could cause a new wave of displacement in the war-torn country.

Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation, has been convulsed by civil war since 2014. That's when the Iran-backed Houthis took control of the country's north including the capital, Sanaa. A Saudi-led military coalition intervened against the Houthis the following year. Despite relentless Saudi airstrikes and a blockade of

Yemen, the war has ground to a stalemate.

The conflict has killed over 10,000 people and created the world's worst humanitarian crisis, leaving millions suffering from food and medical care shortages and pushing the country to the brink of famine last year.

A Houthi official said Sunday that the Shiite group had pushed government forces out of Hazm and were "now chasing them in its outskirts."

Two government officials confirmed the city had fallen, but said government forces aided by Saudi coalition airstrikes were attempting to push back.

All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

The coalition spokesman's office said their "operations" in Jawf "are still ongoing," but did not elaborate.

The Houthi-run al-Masirah satellite TV reported that the coalition carried out at least three airstrikes in Jawf on Sunday.

The rebels earlier this year seized a key supply line linking Marib with several provinces, located along the border with Saudi Arabia. They also took control of the strategic district of Nehm, some 37 miles northeast of the rebel-held capital Sanaa.

"With the seizure of Hazm, the entire Jawf (province) is now considered in their hands, and this would enable them to expand to Marib and even try to take over the south," said Fatima al-Asrar, a non-resident scholar at the Washington-based Middle East Institute.

She said Houthi advances would increase the vulnerability of both civilians, including tribes, allied with the Saudi-backed government of Yemen's president, Abud Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

At least 1,400 families, who were displaced into the district of Gail in Jawf province had moved to Hazm last month. "Now thousands more are expected to leave their homes" because of the Houthi advance, she said.

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# Virus spreads in West; crisis eases in China

By HYUNG-JIN KIM  
AND MATT SEDENSKY  
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The coronavirus appeared for the first time in New York, Moscow and Berlin and clusters of the disease surged around the world, even as new cases in China dropped to their lowest level in six weeks Monday and hundreds of patients were released from hospitals at the epicenter of the outbreak.

Almost nine times more cases were reported outside China than inside the country in the past 24 hours, according to the head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Amid the good-news, bad-news developments, the global death toll from COVID-19 pushed past 3,000, and the number of people infected topped 89,000, with fast-expanding outbreaks in South Korea, Italy and Iran.

Around the world, the virus reshaped people's routines, both at home and at work, from the millions of Japanese schoolchildren facing foot weeks without class to special voting booths for Israelis under quarantine. Mobile hospitals were planned in Iran, and the "Mona Lisa" hung in a vacant room of the shuttered Louvre in Paris.

The Organization for Econom-



JAЕ C. HONG/AP

Commuters wearing masks sit on a train in Tokyo, on Monday.

ic Cooperation and Development warned that the world economy could contract this quarter for the first time since the international financial crisis more than a decade ago.

"Global economic prospects remain subdued and very uncertain," the agency said.

Wall Street nevertheless opened higher after the worst week for stocks since the 2008 crisis.

In the United States, infections ticked upward to over 90 and the country recorded its second death, both of them in Washington state. Health officials said the latest victim was a man in his 70s from a nursing facility near Seattle, in a region where researchers believe the virus may have been circulating for weeks undetected.

Malaysia and Portugal were among the newest places to de-

fect the virus. More than 60 countries — including nine of the 10 most populous — have reported infections.

Even as alarms grew louder in much of the world, Monday brought positive signs from China, where the outbreak started two months ago. China reported 202 new cases of the virus, its lowest daily count since Jan. 21, and the city at the heart of the crisis,

Wuhan, said 2,570 patients were released.

But in other places, problems continued to multiply.

"Just about everywhere, the cases are rising quite quickly in a number of countries," said Ian Mackay, who studies viruses at the University of Queensland in Australia.

South Korea, with the worst outbreak outside of China, said it recorded 599 new cases Monday, bringing the total to 4,335. The death toll rose to 26.

South Korea extended the shutdown of its schools two more weeks to March 23. And the leader of a church that has been blamed for being the source of the country's largest cluster of infections bowed in apology.

"We also did our best but weren't able to contain it fully," said Lee Man-hee, 88, the leader of the Shincheonji church, which some mainstream Christian groups reject as a cult.

In the Middle East, a worsening situation in Iran was accompanied by concern for its top leaders after a member of the council that advises the Islamic republic's supreme leader died of COVID-19. Iran has confirmed 1,501 cases and 66 deaths, but many believe the true number is larger. Its caseload surged more than 250% in just 24 hours.

## Closures at US bases in Italy continue as cases increase

By NANCY MONTGOMERY  
AND KENT HARRIS  
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — U.S. bases in northern Italy entered a second week of school, day care and gym closures as the country's cases of the new coronavirus doubled over the weekend.

The number of confirmed cases jumped in Italy to 1,694, the country's Civil Protection Agency reported Sunday. The death toll also rose to 34, up from 29 the previous day.

Around 90% of all infections are in the

northern regions of Lombardy, Emilia Romagna and Veneto. U.S. Army Garrison Italy and more than 7,000 U.S. troops are based in the Veneto region.

So far, neither soldiers nor civilians associated with the garrison — or with any Europe-based U.S. military unit — have been diagnosed with the virus, officials said. Vicenza officials said that they plan to isolate any sick troops on base, if necessary.

The State Department has designated Veneto among its do-not-travel areas due to the highly contagious virus, for which there is no treatment other than supportive care.

President Donald Trump tweeted Sunday that those arriving to the U.S. from Veneto, among other places, would be screened at U.S. airports.

Base and U.S. European Command officials said Monday they were closely monitoring conditions but that so far there had been no changes for troops leaving Italy to change assignments. They also said that operations in Europe have not been affected.

Aviano Air Base, about 90 miles northeast of Vicenza in the Friuli Venezia-Giulia region, also closed its schools and day care centers through at least the end of

the week, said 1st Lt. Danielle Lucero, a spokeswoman for the 31st Fighter Wing.

"We're in line with the local [Italian] community," Lucero said.

The Friuli Venezia-Giulia region's first six cases were reported over the weekend in Udine, Trieste and Gorizia, all in the region's east, not far from Italy's borders with Slovenia, Croatia and Austria.

The virus has also spread to other parts of Italy, though not as quickly. There are 17 cases in Campania, where Naples and the Navy's 6th Fleet is located. There are nine cases in Sicily, home to Naval Air Station Sigonella, and 13 in Tuscany, home to

## Florida confirms its first 2 virus cases

By TAMARA LUSH  
AND BOBBY CAINA CALVIN  
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Florida officials tried to reassure residents Monday that the risk posed by a new strain of coronavirus remained low, despite revelations that two people had become the first in the state to test positive for the virus.

Florida officials said Sunday they were declaring a public health emergency after announcing two cases, a woman in her 20s who recently returned from Italy and a man in his 60s who had not traveled to any countries of concern.

Gov. Ron DeSantis said at

a news conference Monday in Tampa that the state was doing all it could to respond to the growing health crisis, and that he was seeking emergency funding from state lawmakers to help combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

"Despite these cases, the overall threat to the public remains low," the governor said. "With that said, we do anticipate that more will test positive."

State health officials said they were identifying people who had contact with the two patients now under isolation. The governor said Monday that at least 795 people in Florida have been monitored for the virus, but did not elaborate.

Dr. Scott Rivkees, Florida's

surgeon general, said the man in his 60s had not traveled in any of the countries currently identified for restricted travel by federal authorities, including South Korea, Iran, Italy and China, where the virus originated.

"It is not known how this individual was exposed to COVID-19," Rivkees said at the news conference. "This is a rapidly evolving situation."

U.S. health officials updated the nation's count of coronavirus cases to 91 on Monday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the count includes 45 infections among people who were on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, which is one more than previously reported.



CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis gestures as he stands with State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees during a news conference Monday regarding two residents testing positive for the virus in Tampa, Fla.



## VIRUS OUTBREAK

## Japan bases see run on sanitizer and toilet paper

BY JAMES BOLLINGER  
Stars and Stripes

**MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan** — Shelves at commissaries on military bases across Japan ran short of toilet paper over the weekend as service members prepared for possible quarantines due to COVID-19.

Shoppers in Japan faced long lines over online rumors that Chinese-made toilet paper wouldn't be exported, The Japan Times reported Saturday, in spite of industry and official assurances that enough toilet paper for everyone is made in Japan.

Lauren Ignaffo, spouse of Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Ignaffo from Fighter Attack Squadron 102, said that by Saturday the shelves at the MCAS Iwakuni commissary had been stripped of toilet paper and, oddly enough, pasta and spaghetti sauce.

"In the States the joke is like bread and milk and now it's toilet paper and paper towels," Ignaffo said Monday, after she shared several photos on social media of empty shelves. "I thought the pasta was really funny, though."

Yokosuka Naval Base, home of the Navy's 7th Fleet, reported on a base-affiliated Facebook page that its commissary shelves were being restocked Monday after the weekend run on toilet paper.

The post asked consumers to limit themselves to one item per family per day of several items including toilet paper, cleaning products, disinfecting wipes and rice in order to prevent hoarding.

A shipment of toilet paper arrived Monday at MCAS Iwakuni, said 2nd Lt. Phillip Parker, a base spokesman.

There is historical precedent

for stockpiling toilet paper, The Japan Times report said.

"In 1973, after Arab countries embargoed oil exports to Japan, there were sometimes violent scenes of panicked buyers grabbing toilet paper," the report said. "There were also buying sprees after the March 11, 2011, mega-quake and tsunami."

Hand sanitizer has also been in short supply both in Japanese stores and at base exchanges and commissaries.

Sanitizer was scarce on exchange shelves at bases in South Korea, where the Army garrison at Daegu is under a self-imposed quarantine. Sanitizer was restocked at Osan Air Base and Camp Humphreys, home of U.S. Forces Korea headquarters, over the weekend.

At the MCAS Iwakuni exchange, bottles of a Japanese-made hand sanitizer were being sold for \$18.99, sparking commentary on social media pages. "I first thought that's insane, and I don't know why they couldn't somehow get a hold of American hand sanitizer," Ignaffo said.

The exchange paid that price to a local supplier, Parker told Stars and Stripes in an email Monday. "The hand sanitizer available at the MCX is passed to the consumer at cost and was purchased from a Japanese supplier to ensure the demand for hand sanitizer is met in response to the COVID-19 virus," Parker said. "The (Marine Corps Community Service) works to keep prices as low as possible for SOFA-status personnel aboard the station."

Stars and Stripes reporters Matthew Keeler, Christian Lopez and Caitlin Doornbos contributed to this report. [bullingerjames@strips.com](mailto:bullingerjames@strips.com)  
Twitter: bullingerj2004



Kirsten Winnegar

Shelves that usually hold toilet paper are empty at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, on Sunday, as coronavirus quarantine concerns prompted some to stock up. A new shipment arrived Monday at Iwakuni, said 2nd Lt. Phillip Parker, a base spokesman.

## Locations with confirmed COVID-19 cases

As of 11 a.m. EST March 2



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

NOGA ASSOCIATES/Stars and Stripes

## DODEA students in S. Korea adapt to online study, address pros, cons

BY MATTHEW KEELER AND DAVE ORNAUER  
Stars and Stripes

**OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea** — Students at some Defense Department schools in South Korea face another week, at least, of online instruction as concern over spread of COVID-19 has temporarily closed eight schools there.

Department of Defense Education Activity last week closed those schools for the children of U.S. military parents but ordered teachers to report to work Wednesday to issue assignments via email. Students are expected to complete and submit the assignments online daily.

"It's an experiment," Michelle Pell, a language arts and literature instructor at Daegu Middle-High School, told Stars and Stripes on Friday via Facebook Messenger.

"We're all working through it together. The kids are doing a really good job of following instructions and communicating," she said. "We are working on perfecting the process. The military command on our part is making really good decisions in this situation."

DODEA officials in South Korea and military commanders plan to reassess the school closures and other measures imposed to prevent the new coronavirus from spreading.

"We're hoping to be able to resume normal school operations as soon as it's possible," DODEA communications chief Frank O'Gara said in an email Wednesday. "But we've made plans in the event that students are required to stay home for a longer period of time. Our education and curriculum support matter experts are looking at a number of options in case of longer-term closures."

Meanwhile, remote learning is showing its wrinkles. Online interviews with a handful of high-school students and teachers revealed advantages and disadvantages to learning online.

One advantage, said Humphreys High School junior Jake Thomas, is being able to work at his own pace "as long as I get the assignments in on time."

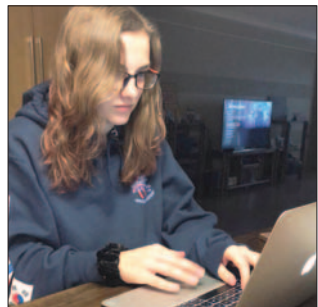
The main disadvantage is not always having a teacher on hand to give an instant answer to a question, Thomas and other students said.

For some, the classroom setting itself is conducive to learning.

"I would rather be in class because I'm a more hands-on, in-person learner than an online learner," said Humphreys High School senior Lily Austinson.

Austinson's mother, Molly Austinson, teaches world regions and is also the high school yearbook sponsor. Her students make liberal use of Google Hangouts to communicate about the yearbook out side of the classroom.

"This is creating a unique challenge," Molly Austinson said of working on the yearbook, "but also



Lisa Lyons

Lexie Berry, a junior at Daegu Middle-High School in South Korea, says she prefers the immediacy of a classroom over virtual study.

some cool opportunities for creativity."

For some parents, having their children home from school is a challenge.

"It adds some stress at home because it makes us into the enforcers making sure they are getting done what they would normally do during the school day," military spouse Dana DeLuca said Friday. "But for the most part I think it's a blessing."

DeLuca teams up with her husband, Army chaplain (Capt.) Marc DeLuca, of the 35th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, to ensure their two high-school students and two elementary students attending Osan Air Base schools stay on task.

Dana DeLuca said the concept is a good idea if the kids are going to be out of school for an extended period, but questions if it is a sustainable model.

She said her 17-year-old is capable of a self-taught, online environment, but her 15-year-old needs face-to-face interaction.

Molly Austinson said Camp Humphreys and DODEA's Korea district leadership have been "fantastic" about communicating with the schools and the community.

"Students are at the heart of everything we do," O'Gara said. "Maintaining a safe place for them to go to school and maintaining continuity of education is all part of the support that we provide to military families."

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## NATION



SANTIAGO FLORES, SOUTH BEND (IN.) TRIBUNE/AP

Sunday, Pete Buttigieg announced he was suspending his White House bid in South Bend, Ind.

## Inside the final month of Pete Buttigieg's historic campaign

By STEVE PEOPLES  
AND THOMAS BEAUMONT  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — He opened February by sharing victory with one of the Democratic Party's best-known figures and ended it with a humbling defeat at the hands of another. Yet Pete Buttigieg's unlikely path over the last 30 days exceeded virtually everyone's expectations of his presidential ambitions, except, perhaps, his own.

The former mayor of Indiana's fourth largest city, an openly gay 38-year-old whose name most voters still can't pronounce, formally suspended his White House bid Sunday night. He did so acknowledging that he no longer had a viable path to the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, even after finishing in the top four in each of the first four contests of the 2020 primary season.

"By every historical measure, we were never supposed to get anywhere at all," Buttigieg reminded his hometown crowd, which was disappointed and hopeful at the same time. The crowd interrupted his speech with chants of "2024."

Buttigieg began the month effectively in a first-place tie with progressive powerhouse Bernie Sanders in Iowa's presidential caucuses. The mayor made history as the first openly gay candidate to earn a presidential delegate, never mind becoming the first to finish on top in any presidential primary contest.

He won over Iowa as a fresh-faced Democrat with a pragmatic Midwestern message backed by an aggressive strategy to reach

voters in overlooked rural communities. And if not for the state's chaotic struggle to report its results, the Feb. 3 contest could have vaulted him to further heights.

Buttigieg and his competitors pivoted quickly to New Hampshire, where he was an underdog in a field that featured two neighboring senators and a former vice president. Yet the mayor from nearly 1,000 miles away showed surprising strength again.

He nearly tripled Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren's vote total and finished just one percentage point behind Sanders, the winner.

"You know, he very nearly pulled it off," said David Axelrod, who served as the senior adviser to former President Barack Obama and was at times an unofficial Buttigieg booster.

Axelrod cited Iowa's reporting fiasco and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar's New Hampshire surge as key factors that limited Buttigieg's rise.

"If those two things would have been different, we would be having a different conversation now," he said.

Questions about Buttigieg's appeal with voters of color loomed over strong finishes in overwhelmingly white Iowa and New Hampshire, however. And as soon as the race shifted into more diverse terrain, Buttigieg's star began to fade.

In Nevada, he finished in third place behind Sanders and former Vice President Joe Biden, even as he bested two senators and a billionaire. And by the time the race moved to South Carolina a week later, Buttigieg's weakness with African American voters was

painfully exposed.

He failed to hit double digits in the first-in-the-South contest Saturday, scoring a distant fourth in a state where more than half of Democratic primary voters were not white. Less than two hours after holding what would be his final rally in Raleigh, N.C., Buttigieg was hunkered on the phone in a hotel near Americus, Ga., working out the details of ending his campaign, people familiar with the conversation said.

Having laid out a narrow but viable path to the nomination through an uncertain state-by-state fight, advisers painted a picture of a difficult road ahead.

After someone interjected that Buttigieg should speak, the candidate, known for an understated, deliberative style, noted effectively that if the conversation had reached that point, the decision was pretty clear.

Buttigieg's decision reflected the urgency of the moment, as establishment Democrats feared that Sanders' rise might be unstoppable unless party moderates united behind Biden's candidacy. It also reflected the no-time-to-waste analytical nature of Buttigieg himself, a former Rhodes scholar who worked for the McKinsey & Co. management consulting firm soon after finishing his Ivy League education.

"The truth is the path has narrowed to a close for our candidacy, if not for our cause," Buttigieg told supporters in South Bend. "We must recognize that at this point in the race, the best way to keep faith with those goals and ideals is to step aside and help bring our party and country together."

## Klobuchar set to back Biden after ending bid

Associated Press

Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar ended her Democratic presidential campaign on Monday and plans to endorse rival Joe Biden in an effort to unify moderate voters behind the former vice president's White House bid.

She is flying to Dallas and plans to join Biden at his rally Monday night, according to her campaign.

Klobuchar was the second presidential candidate to exit the race in less than 24 hours, following Pete Buttigieg's departure late Sunday. Their decisions reflect an urgent push among moderates to consolidate behind Biden as a counter to progressive rival Bernie Sanders.

Klobuchar outlasted several better-known and better-funded Democrats, thanks to a better-than-expected third-place finish in New Hampshire. But she couldn't turn that into success elsewhere, as she struggled to build out a campaign that could compete across the country and had poor showings in the next contests.

The three-term senator had one of this cycle's more memorable campaign launches, standing outside in a Minnesota snowstorm last February to tout her "grit" and Midwestern sensibilities. Klobuchar argued that her record of getting things done in Washington and winning even in Republican parts of her state would help her win traditionally Democratic heartland states like Wisconsin and Michigan that flipped in 2016 to give Donald Trump the presidency.

She was hoping to own the moderate lane of a Democratic field that grew to some two dozen candidates. But that got much tough-



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., ended her presidential campaign on Monday and plans to endorse rival Joe Biden.

er when Biden joined the race in April, starting as a front-runner and remaining there. Klobuchar also was quickly overshadowed by Buttigieg, a fellow Midwesterner who shot from being the largely unknown mayor of South Bend, Ind., to a top contender on a mix of intelligence, strong oratory and youthful optimism. Buttigieg dropped out on Sunday, saying he no longer had a viable path to the nomination. He has not endorsed anyone.

Klobuchar entered the race with low name recognition compared with many of her rivals, a disadvantage she was still citing a year into her campaign. Outside Minnesota, the lawyer and former prosecutor was best known for her questioning of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh during a 2018 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing.

Even before she got into the race, Klobuchar was hit with news stories claiming she mistreated her Senate staff, and she had a higher-than-usual turnover rate in her office. Klobuchar said she is a "tough boss" but countered that she has several longtime employees, including the manager of her presidential campaign.

## Trump campaign looks to the skies to reach voters

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's campaign is planning to fly a blimp over swing states to get its message out — and to collect reams of data.

The blimp with Trump logos is set to fly between May and July, and will encourage Trump supporters to text the campaign, a move aimed at helping to refine the campaign's already voluminous data on voters in key states, the campaign confirmed Sunday. The plans for the blimp were first

reported by Politico.

The unconventional strategy is borne in part out of the campaign's record fundraising, which has given aides the freedom to explore new ways to reach voters. Last week, the campaign unveiled plans to open 15 "Black Voices for Trump Community Centers" in urban areas to try to make inroads with the traditionally Democratic voting bloc.

The campaign is also discussing the possibility of a fundraising contest to give supporters the opportunity to fly in the blimp.



## NATION

# Judge cites hire, annuls asylum directive on 5

By ELLIOT SPAGAT  
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A federal judge has ruled that Ken Cuccinelli was unlawfully appointed to lead the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services agency and, as a result, lacked authority to give asylum seekers less time to prepare for initial screening interviews.

Cuccinelli, a former Virginia attorney general and an immigration hardliner, was named to a new position of "principal deputy director" in June, which immediately made him acting director because Lee Francis Cisna had just resigned. The agency grants green cards and other visas and also oversees asylum officers.

U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss in Washington found Cuccinelli's appointment violated the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, a 1998 law governing who is eligible to lead federal agencies in an acting capacity.

Cuccinelli, in an interview with Fox News Channel on Monday, said that President Donald Trump's administration would

appeal the ruling and that his agency would take steps to try to prevent the invalidation of other decisions made under his tenure.

The ruling, issued Sunday, was at odds with Trump's penchant for temporary appointments. At Homeland Security, Chad Wolf is acting secretary, and the heads of Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Citizenship and Immigration Services are also in acting roles.

The judge wrote that Cuccinelli didn't qualify for exceptions for officials who won Senate approval for other positions or spent 90 days in the previous year at the agency.

The administration's reading of the law "would decimate this carefully crafted framework," Moss wrote in his 55-page ruling. "The President would be relieved of responsibility and accountability for selecting acting officials, and the universe of those eligible to serve in an acting capacity would be vastly expanded."

Moss, an appointee of President Barack Obama, set aside a Cuccinelli directive to give asylum seekers less time to consult attorneys before an initial screening interview, but his decision applies only to the five Hondurans who sued. He did not address other Cuccinelli actions.



JOSE LUIS MAGANA/AP

**A federal judge has ruled that Ken Cuccinelli, acting director for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, seen here on Oct. 30, was unlawfully appointed to lead the agency.**

chinnelli directive to give asylum seekers less time to consult attorneys before an initial screening interview, but his decision applies only to the five Hondurans who sued. He did not address other Cuccinelli actions.

Department of Homeland Security spokeswoman Heather Swift said, "We obviously disagree with

the court's opinion and are looking more closely at it."

Cuccinelli is now acting deputy Homeland Security secretary, the department's No. 2 position. Joseph Edlow, a longtime congressional aide who joined Citizenship and Immigration Services in July, was named last month to run the agency's day-to-day operations.

## High court: Appeal on bump stock ban denied

By MARK SHERMAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday rejected an appeal of the federal ban on bump stocks, devices that allow semi-automatic firearms to fire rapidly like machine guns.

The justices did not comment in declining to review a lower court ruling that upheld the ban, which took effect nearly a year ago.

President Donald Trump said that the government would move to ban bump stocks, following a 2017 shooting in Las Vegas in which a gunman attached bump stocks to assault-style rifles he used to shoot concertgoers from his hotel room, killing 58 and injuring hundreds.

The Trump administration's move was an about-face for the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. In 2010, under the Obama administration, the ATF found that the devices were legal. But under the Trump administration, officials revisited that determination and found it incorrect. The revised regulation requires owners either to destroy their bump stocks or surrender them. The government estimates hundreds of thousands of the devices have been sold.

## Charges dropped against man shot by police

Associated Press

CHICAGO — A man shot and seriously wounded by a Chicago police officer in a downtown train station won't face charges, as prosecutors on Sunday dropped the criminal case stemming from an incident captured on bystander video and shared widely.

Cook County prosecutors moved to drop resisting arrest and criminal narcotics charges against Ariel Roman at the request of Chicago police, which was approved Sunday by a judge, according to the Chicago Tribune.

Interim Police Superintendent Charlie Beck said he asked Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx to drop the charges, which were initiated by police, according to a statement.

"Given the totality of circumstances and the department's significant level of concern around this incident, it would be insensitive to advocate for these charges," police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said.

"While we will not rush to judgment, the level of concern over the tactics used in this incident is significant."

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability was investigating the use of force, while the state's attorney and FBI conducted the underlying criminal review. Guglielmi said the department was cooperating fully.

Foxx's office said they agreed with Chicago police's request to drop the charges.

Roman's attorney, Gloria Schmidt Rodriguez, has said he underwent surgery after he was shot in the abdomen and buttocks and that he will likely need more operations. He remained hospitalized Sunday but was no longer in critical condition.

Roman's family was pleased with the decision to dismiss all charges, said Schmidt Rodriguez. In a statement, she said Roman "remembers everything about the incident that took place and is fully committed to cooperating with the various investigations."

The shooting happened Friday afternoon. An officer who spotted a man jump-

ing from one car to another in violation of a city ordinance called for backup and two officers chased and grabbed the man.

The video shows a male officer on top of the suspect at the base of an escalator, struggling to keep the man still. The suspect can be heard saying, "I didn't do nothing to you," as the officer trying to hold him down says, "stop resisting," several times. They stand up, and a female officer appears to try to pepper spray the man's face before telling him to show his hands.

The man refuses to be handcuffed. Stun guns can be seen on the floor. With the man still struggling to get away, the female officer shouts, "Give him your hands," and a gunshot rings out. As the man flees up the escalator with the officers in pursuit, a second shot is fired.

Police have said only one officer fired a weapon, striking Roman twice, but the department has not named either of the officers involved.



MICHAEL McDUNNAN/AP

**Chicago police officers try to apprehend a suspect inside a train station on Friday. The charges against the suspect, who was shot twice by one of the officers, have been dropped.**

## Man with gun killed by police during incident at Catholic church

Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Santa Ana police officers fatally shot an armed man Sunday afternoon inside a Catholic church, the Orange County Register reported.

The shooting at the altar took

place shortly after the officers were flagged down at 4:20 p.m. and was told someone inside Immaculate Heart of Mary Church had a gun, police Cpl. Anthony Bertagna said.

The officers found the man with a gun inside the church, and then

the shooting took place shortly thereafter, Bertagna said.

The man ran outside with the gun and collapsed on a nearby street, Bertagna said. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

"We understand he was distraught over a relationship," Ber-

tagna told the Register. "We're not sure if that's why he was here."

Police Chief David Valentin said witnesses reported the man was distraught and possibly suicidal, and it didn't appear he was planning a mass shooting.

Officers were told by people inside

the church, who had arrived for a 5 p.m. service, that another person may have been with the suspect. Officers searched the church and a nearby school, but by early Sunday evening had not yet found another suspect, Bertagna told the Register.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Spring break town says no booze on beach

**FL PANAMA CITY** — Spring breakers be forewarned: you still can't drink booze in March on the beach in a Florida town seeking to curb rowdy parties.

The Panama City News Herald reported that the monthlong ban is paired with a 2 a.m. deadline to buy alcohol anywhere within city limits.

Panama City Police Chief Drew Whitman said the zero-tolerance policy originally enacted in 2015 has helped the city transition from a national spring break hot-spot to a more family-friendly destination all year long.

## Man accused of leaving son in car at casino

**RI LINCOLN** — A Rhode Island father was charged with leaving his 3-year-old autistic son alone outside in a car while he placed bets in a casino.

The Rhode Island State Police said Mitchell Cuevas, 38, of Providence was arrested and charged with cruelty to or neglect of a child, and obstructing an officer in the execution of duty.

Patrons of the Twin River Casino alerted the State Police Gaming Enforcement Unit they saw the child abandoned in a vehicle parked in the casino hotel lot.

Police said the child had been left unattended in the locked vehicle with no heat, in 35-degree weather, for approximately a half hour.

## Woman saved, man dies in attempt to save truck

**KS HOLTON** — An attempt to pull a truck found tangled over a culvert from the brink ended with the vehicle flipping over and landing upside down in a full ditch, killing a man inside, officials in northeastern Kansas said.

The incident happened on state Highway 116 about four miles east of Holton, station KSNT reported. Jackson County Sheriff Tim Morse said a passerby who came upon the stranded truck tried to get it back on the road when it flipped over into the ditch.

A woman in the truck was pushed to safety, but Morse said the man in the truck could not be saved.

## Man accused of hiring children to sell candy

**KY BOWLING GREEN** — Kentucky is seeking \$45,000 in fines from an Indiana man who is accused of using children to sell candy in Bowling Green.

Sledman Floyd, 55, also faces 12 felony charges of human trafficking. The Lexington Herald-Leader reported.

According to the state attorney general's office, Floyd brought 12 children to Kentucky with him in July 2019 to sell candy by knocking on doors.

Investigators said Floyd made the juveniles share a motel room



DENISE CATHEY, THE BROWNSVILLE (TEXAS) HERALD/AP

## Celebration of border bonds

Doves fly out of delegates' hands Friday as a symbol of unity and friendship between the United States and Mexico at the Hands Across the Border event on Gateway International Bridge between Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Mexico. The annual event held by the Mr. Amigo Association celebrates the close relationship between the cities with an event on the midway point between the United States and Mexico on the bridge.

with three adults and pay for their own meals and water.

Floyd, who lives in Indianapolis, was initially charged with misdemeanor counts of endangering minors in the summer of 2019, but a grand jury returned more serious charges.

## Police: Teen led police on 90 mph pursuit

**ME AUBURN** — A 15-year-old boy led police on a high-speed chase in a stolen vehicle before crashing into a convenience store, police said. The pursuit reached speeds up to 90 mph and police abandoned the pursuit in downtown Auburn before the car crashed, police said.

The driver was evaluated at Maine Medical Center and transported to Long Creek Youth Development Center for an unrelated warrant. The passenger was not charged and was returned to his parents.

The chase began when a Cumberland County deputy headed to an unrelated emergency in Gray noticed a car that was being operated erratically and learned that it was stolen.

## Mom with 4-year-old in car charged with DUI

**NH MANCHESTER** — New Hampshire police charged a mother with driving under the influence and child en-

## THE CENSUS

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search. Officials say Cardino will get permission to validate the radar's findings by digging just close enough to confirm their existence without touching them.

dangerment after she was found passed out at the wheel.

Manchester Police responded to a report of an unconscious woman at the steering wheel while her 4-year-old son cried in the backseat, New England Cable News reported.

Police said when they arrived Kristie Moulton was awake but spoke slowly, slurred her words, and had bloodshot eyes.

## Trove of Spanish coins dating to 1715 found

**FL INDIAN RIVER SHORES** — A trove of Spanish coins dating back to a 1715 shipwreck during a storm were found along a beach in Florida.

TC Palm newspapers reported that treasure hunter Jonah Martinez, 43, located the coins using a metal detector. He was able to dig out 22 silver coins he estimates are worth about \$7,000.

Twelve Spanish galleons laden with treasures from the New World were bound for Spain on July 31, 1715, but 11 were lost

during a hurricane off the coast of Florida.

## Roadside attraction Oliver the camel dies

**VT FERRISBURGH** — Oliver the camel, a quirky roadside attraction and social media darling, died at age 17 in Vermont.

"Ollie" delighted travelers along Route 7 in Ferrisburgh for nearly two decades. Many motorists stopped for photos and selfies with the friendly creature, which sported two humps.

Oliver Camel's Facebook page announced that he died on Feb. 21. It did not cite the cause of his death.

The Facebook post noted that "Ollie" was loved and spoiled, and looking forward to an afterlife.

## Drunken driver hits 2 state trooper cars

**MA CHICOPEE** — Two Massachusetts State Troopers escaped serious injury after a suspected drunken driv-

er lost control of his vehicle and slammed into both of the troopers' police vehicles as they were standing outside.

A state police dog inside one of the cruisers was taken to a veterinary hospital for an examination but did not suffer any serious injuries.

The driver of the Subaru was identified as Ryan Churilo, 29, of East Windsor, Conn.

## Stolen cremains found by jogger on a trail

**IA DIKE** — A wooden box containing the cremated remains of a Dike man that was stolen in a home burglary was recovered, authorities said.

Grundy County sheriff's deputies had reported that the cremains of Daniel Evanson, 65, were stolen during a break-in at his rural home sometime late Feb. 14 or early Feb. 15. Evanson died Feb. 6.

Evanson's family members had taken to social media to plead for the public's help in finding the remains and the ornate wooden box holding them.

A jogger found the box of cremains on a trail in Cedar Falls, the Grundy County Sheriff's Department told WOI.

"I assume they took the box thinking it was something special and didn't know what it contained," Chief Deputy Sheriff Kirk Dolleslager told The Courier.

From wire reports

## FACES

# Convincingly CANINE

## Movement coach Notary helps CGI dog in 'Call of the Wild' come to life

By BETHONIE BUTLER  
The Washington Post

**T**erry Notary didn't fall into the film industry so much as he glided into it like the Cirque du Soleil acrobat he was. Notary had just left the circus entertainment company when Ron Howard spotted him teaching extras how to move like the Whos in Whoville on the set of the 2000 comedy "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

Notary had never worked on a film set before — he and several other Cirque alums had been recruited by the film's stunt coordinator to create acrobatic gags for the Whos — and it seemed obvious to him that all of Whoville's residents should move like they were from the same, however fictional, species. It hadn't occurred to him that he had broken an unwritten rule of set decorum by taking it upon himself to teach them until the famed director called Notary into his office.

Luckily for Notary, Howard was impressed by what he had seen. The director asked if he would teach everybody. Within a week Notary had a sound stage and equipment, ranging from trampolines to unicycles, at his disposal. He also landed a job title he hadn't previously known existed: movement choreographer.

Twenty years after Howard's Dr. Seuss adaptation hit theaters, Notary is still teaching actors how to move. He's been a movement choreographer on the sets of the "Planet of the Apes," "Avengers" and "Hobbit" franchises, among other films. "It's about undoing effort and getting back to our roots," Notary explained. He can currently be seen in theaters playing Buck, the canine protagonist in the adaptation of Jack London's "The Call of the Wild," opposite Harrison Ford.

Notary's career has become a hybrid of movement choreography, stunt coordination and motion-capture acting. He's lent his carefully studied movements to apes, hobbits and the Na'vi humanoid of James Cameron's "Avatar." Social media users have



20th Century Fox

Terry Notary, below, provided movements for Buck the dog in "The Call of the Wild," starring Harrison Ford.



ALBERTO E. RODRIGUEZ/Getty Images

gotten a kick out of GIFs highlighting Notary's transition into the doe-eyed St. Bernard mix. But Notary said playing man's best friend to a man played by Harrison Ford wasn't awkward at all. "We just got super comfortable being really close to each other all the time."

That doesn't mean it wasn't challenging. "I had to look into his soul, you know, without any judgment, without any human thought," Notary said. "You just have to be this sort of open, spongy receiver." The Los Angeles-based actor used his own dogs — one, he said, is "dumber than a doornail," and the other is "just the smartest thing you've ever met in your life" — as inspiration while getting into character. He filmed them in slow motion in their natural habitat: the front yard. "It was interesting — watching it back and really just seeing how they moved and the little nuances that they have," Notary said. "They read everything; they read tone, inflection, expression and energy all at the same time. So it's like this wave of everything coming at them."

Notary has also studied apes — his favorite animal to play. He learned a great deal about them after getting acquainted with two chimpanzees on the set of Tim Burton's "Planet of the Apes."

Notary has done 10 films with Andy Serkis, the London-born actor known for playing Gollum in "The Lord of the Rings" and for generating Oscar buzz as Caesar in "War for the Planet of the Apes." Notary, who has called Serkis "one of the greatest actors ever," is set to direct the actor in "The Last Netherland" this year. The film will mark Notary's directorial debut.

## Duff asks Disney to allow reboot of 'Lizzie McGuire' to move to Hulu

By LYNN ELBER  
Associated Press

Hilary Duff is asking Disney to find a TV home that's more appropriate to the grown-up "Lizzie McGuire."

In an Instagram post, the actress who's reprising the title character for Disney Plus, said the streaming service isn't the best fit, suggesting Hulu instead. The original series, about a girl whose thoughts are expressed by her animated doppelganger, aired from 2001 to 2004 on the Disney Channel.

"Was incredibly excited to launch 'Lizzie' on D+ and my passion remains," Duff said in the Feb. 28 post. "However, I feel a huge responsibility to honor the fans' relationship with Lizzie who, like me, grew up seeing themselves in her. I'd be doing a disservice to everyone by limiting the realities of a 30-year-old's journey to live under the ceiling of a PG rating."

The original series was an authentic portrayal of Lizzie as a preteen and teenager, Duff said, and her next chapters should be "as real and relatable."

Production on the reboot was suspended in January after the exit of showrunner and original series creator Terri Minsky, trade publication Variety has reported.

"We paused production on 'Lizzie McGuire' a few weeks ago to allow time for some creative re-development," Disney said in a statement provided Saturday. "Our goal is to resume production and to tell an authentic story that connects to the millions who are emotionally invested in the character, and a new generation of viewers too."



Duff

## Green Day, 'The Amazing Race' change plans due to virus fears

From wire reports

Green Day and BTS have joined the list of music acts postponing or axing shows around the world due to coronavirus concerns.

"We have unfortunately made the difficult decision to postpone our upcoming shows in Asia due to the health + travel concerns with coronavirus," the "American Idiot" rockers tweeted Feb. 27. "We know it sucks, as we were looking forward to seeing you all, but hold on to your tickets we'll be announcing the new dates very soon."

Green Day was to have played a total of nine dates in March in Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan.

K-pop stars BTS also canceled four hometown shows set for April 11, 12, 18 and 19 in Seoul, South Korea, last week due to coronavirus concerns.

British rapper Stormzy has, per his website, canceled a March 28 date in Hong Kong and a March 29 show in Seoul, and

New Order put off shows with Pet Shop Boys on March 3-4 in Tokyo and March 6 in Osaka, Japan.

R&B singer Khalid made the decision earlier than most, two weeks ago, when he postponed the entire Asian leg of his tour, which was to have hit Bangkok, Singapore, Jakarta, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo, Seoul, Mumbai and Bangalore between March 24 and April 14.

Meanwhile, in Italy, which as of Sunday had the largest coronavirus outbreak outside of Asia, the thrash-metal band Testament canceled a Milan show.

Production on world-travel competition television series "The Amazing Race" has been halted, the network said Feb. 28.

"CBS and the producers of 'The Amazing Race' have taken the precautionary measure of temporarily suspending production on the 33rd season of the series. All contestants and production staff are in the process of returning home," the network said in a statement.

No racers or members of the traveling

production team on the 10-time Emmy-winning show have contracted or shown symptoms of the virus, the network said, nor were they known to be exposed. CBS promised that all involved would continue to be monitored after returning home.

No new production start date has been set.

### 'The Invisible Man' tops box office with \$29 million

The Elisabeth Moss-led thriller "The Invisible Man" rode a wave of good reviews to a very visible spot atop the box office this weekend. Universal Pictures on Sunday estimated that the film from writer-director Leigh Whannell earned \$29 million from North American theaters. Internationally, the Blumhouse production picked up an additional \$20.2 million.

"The Invisible Man" carried a relatively modest budget, costing under \$10 million to produce.

"Sonic the Hedgehog" slid to second

place in its third weekend in theaters adding \$16 million and bringing its domestic total to \$128.3 million. "The Call of the Wild," with Harrison Ford, placed third in its second weekend with \$13.2 million.

### America Ferrera to depart NBC comedy 'Superstore'

"Superstore" is losing its manager — star America Ferrera says she's departing the NBC sitcom after its current season.

Ferrera plays the manager of a big box store in the show, which has already been renewed for a sixth season. The actress also serves as an executive producer on the series and has directed several episodes.

The actress became the first Latina actress to win the top comedy actress Emmy Award for her title role in the series "Ugly Betty" in 2007.

She announced on New Year's Eve that she is expecting her second child.

"Superstore" airs Fridays on AFN-Prime.



## WORLD

# Hostage crisis in Philippines ends peacefully

By JIM GOMEZ  
AND AARON FAVILA  
Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A recently dismissed security guard freed dozens of hostages and was subdued by police after walking out of a shopping mall in the Philippines capital on Monday, ending a daylong hostage crisis in an upscale commercial district near the police and military headquarters, officials said.

The former guard at the Greenhills shopping center, identified by police as Archie Paray, left the mall in San Juan City in metropolitan Manila with the remaining hostages, who were then secured by police. Several others had managed to escape earlier, police said.

"Everyone is in shock, very traumatized. We'll have to give them time to recover," said San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora, who ordered an investigation, including into how the suspect was able to enter the mall with a pistol and

grenades.

Instead of being immediately arrested, the suspect was allowed to speak for several minutes to journalists and authorities to describe his grievances against his former bosses, whom he accused of corruption and abuse before police approached and subdued him.

"I'm very thankful that everything ended up peacefully," said the mayor, who negotiated with the hostage-taker to give up his weapons and guaranteed his safety shortly before the crisis ended.

The gunman shot and wounded a security officer at the V-Mall, part of the Greenhills complex before he rushed to the second floor and took the hostages, Zamora said. The mall officer was in stable condition at a nearby hospital.

The hostage taker was dismissed after abandoning his job in recent weeks without notifying management, Zamora said.



AARON FAVILA/AP

Former security guard Archie Paray, right, talks to media shortly after releasing all his hostages at the V-mall in Manila, Philippines, on Monday.

## Iraq's PM-designate withdraws from post

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA  
Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's prime minister-designate announced his withdrawal from the post Sunday night after failing to secure parliamentary support for his Cabinet selection, prolonging the political deadlock in the country amid multiple economic, health and security challenges.

Prime Minister-designate Mohammed Alawi blamed political parties he did not name, saying they "were not serious about implementing reforms that they promised to the people" and accusing them of placing obstacles in the way of a new and independent government.

"If I agreed to offer concessions, I would be prime minister now, but I tried everything possible to save the country from sliding toward the unknown and resolve the current crisis. But the negotiations hit repeated snags," he said in a short address to the nation, explaining his decision to withdraw. He accused some parties of negotiating "purely for narrow interests."

Alawi's withdrawal a month after he was selected for the post plunges the country in more uncertainty at a critical time and as the country weathers troubled times, including ongoing anti-government protests and the constant threat of being ensnared by festering U.S.-Iran tensions.



KHALID MOHAMMED/AP

Anti-government protesters hold Iraqi flags during a rally in Baghdad on Sunday.

Shortly after he spoke, two mortar shells landed in Iraq's Green Zone where the U.S. Embassy and government offices are located, without causing any injuries, two security officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Iraq on Sunday marked five months since a popular uprising

against the country's corrupt political class erupted in Baghdad and southern provinces. Iraqis took to the streets in the thousands on Oct. 1 to decry rampant government corruption, unemployment and poor services. Demonstrators rejected Alawi's candidacy outright, saying he was the choice of the political elite and not the street.

## Putin boasts about new weapons for defense plan

Associated Press

MOSCOW — President Vladimir Putin says that Russia has developed unique offense weapons without the intention of starting a war with anyone but to maintain "strategic balance" and "strategic stability" in the world.

"We are not going to fight against anyone. We are going to create conditions so that nobody wants to fight against us," Putin said in an interview with the state-run Tass news agency, a part of which was released Monday.

The three-hour-long interview marks Putin's 20 years in power and is being divided into 20 parts being released over a period of weeks and each dedicated to a separate issue. In episodes that have already been released, Russia's leader talked about the recent government reshuffle, Ukraine, mass protests in Moscow this summer and the use of modern technology.

Russia has created "offensive strike systems the world has never seen," and which are forcing the U.S. to try to catch up, Putin told Tass.

Having these systems in place allows the Kremlin to "maintain strategic stability and strategic balance" that the U.S. tried to "upset" with their missile defense systems, the president added. "It is essential not only for us but also for global security," Putin concluded.

## Child dies as migrants rush Greek-Turkish border

Associated Press

KASTANIES, Greece — Greek police fired tear gas at migrants trying to push into Greece from Turkey through the land border Monday, and a child died when a dinghy boat capsized during a sea crossing after Turkey opened its frontier for migrants and refugees to enter Europe.

The child's death, reported by the Greek coast guard, was the first since thousands of migrants began massing at the frontiers with Greece over the weekend after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced an easing of restrictions on those wishing to cross to Europe.

Turkey's announcement, initially by an official on Thursday, marked a dramatic departure from a previous policy of containing the hundreds of thousands of refugees and mi-

grants in Turkey. Erdogan apparently aims to pressure Europe into offering Turkey more support in dealing with the fallout from the Syrian war to its south.

Erdogan said Monday that Western leaders had started to call him urging him to reverse the border opening. He said he told them, "It's done, the doors are open now. You will have your share of this burden now." He added that soon "the number of people going to the border will be expressed in millions."

Thousands of migrants on Monday tried to find a way across Turkey's land border into Greece, which has made clear its borders will remain closed. Dozens managing to pass through either border fences or fording the river. As Greek police fired tear gas, several hundred migrants holding white flags shouted "peace, peace." Others were trying to reach Greek islands from the Turkish coast.



MICHAEL VAKALAKIS/AP

Migrants arrive at the village of Skala Sikaminias, on the Greek island of Lesbos, after crossing the Aegean sea from Turkey on Monday.

## WORLD



ECKHARD SCHULZ/AP

A warm winter means that for the first time Germany's vineyards will produce no ice wine.

## Warm winter nixes special German ice wine

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — A warm winter means that, for apparently the first time in the history of German winemaking, the country's vineyards will produce no ice wine — a pricey nectar made from grapes that have been left to freeze on the vine.

The German Wine Institute said Sunday that none of the country's wine regions saw the necessary low temperature of 19 degrees Fahrenheit.

A succession of warm winters

have cut into ice wine production recently, the institute said, noting that in 2017, only seven producers managed to make it.

"If warm winters become more frequent over the coming years, ice wines from Germany's regions will soon become an even more expensive rarity than they already are," said wine institute spokesman Ernst Buescher.

Freezing the grapes before they are crushed concentrates the sugar and leads to an intensely sweet, golden wine often served with dessert.

# Friends say Tijuana woman was stalked even after death

By MARK STEVENSON  
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — The man was obsessed with Marbella Valdez. He sent her gifts, bought food for her friends. Prosecutors say he even planted a tracking device on her car.

And when the 20-year-old law student's body was found beaten, bound and strangled, he approached police to demand the case be solved. He even turned up at her funeral bearing a floral arrangement and wearing a T-shirt with her photograph and the feminist slogan "Not One More Woman" printed on it.

A week later, he was arrested and charged with her murder.

The man — identified by Mexican rules only by his first name, Juan — has insisted he is innocent. But friends and family say that Valdez was stalked in life and even after death.

By the time he came to her funeral, Valdez's family already believed he was the one who killed her, but they couldn't say a word.

"And the guy showed up at the funeral and we had to shut our mouths, which was the hardest thing in the world," said William H. Messick, a software executive who has run a self-funded nonprofit to help kids like Valdez as they age out of orphanages. While he never legally adopted her, she considered him a father.

"I wanted to throw up every time I saw him, I

wanted to kill him," Messick said.

"And we're getting thrown under the bus. In the media, people are like, 'Oh my God, why did they let him go to the funeral?' We had no choice, we had to play along otherwise he would have fled or he would have killed Brenda (Villarreal, Valdez's adoptive sister)" he said.

Juan had started pursuing Valdez since mid-2019, targeting her mainly at her day job as a pump attendant at an all-female gas station in Tijuana.

He had been trying to win Valdez's trust for months, giving her chocolate, flowers, stuffed animals and other gifts.

But a more sinister side gradually emerged. Messick said that Juan seemed always to know where Valdez was. After his arrest, police found a GPS locating device to her car, and Messick said that he believed the man may have taken a copy of the keys to her apartment.

For three days after her disappearance, relatives had been telling police they suspected Juan of taking her. Villarreal believes that if they had searched Juan's house, they could have found her alive. "I told them, 'If you had acted, my sister might still be alive,'" Villarreal said.

"The level of suffering is so many degrees, it's so painful," Messick said, days after the initial arraignment. "The guy was smiling at the hearing."

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Ernie Gates

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## OPINION

## Our chance to end the Afghanistan War

By MARK ESPER  
Special to The Washington Post

On Sept. 11, 2001, as many of us remember too well, al-Qaida perpetrated its murderous attacks against the United States that resulted in the tragic loss of life in New York, at the Pentagon and an empty field in Pennsylvania. Soon after, the U.S. military deployed to Afghanistan to defeat these terrorists and remove the safe haven that the Taliban offered them. For more than 18 years, America has been protected. But success has come at a high price. Nearly 3,000 U.S. and allied troops have been killed in action, thousands more have been wounded, and we have spent more than \$1 trillion to keep us safe and help the people of Afghanistan. The U.S. military and our allies have performed remarkably; progress has been made. And while the conflict is not over, our Afghan partners have rightly taken the lead and borne the brunt of the fight in recent years.

The best guarantee of America's continued safety, however, is not continuing along this path. Peace will not come through military means; rather, safety and security for the United States, our allies and Afghanistan will be won when all Afghans lay down their arms, sit beside one another and decide their future together. A political solution is the best way forward.

We are now at the cusp of such an opportunity. On Saturday, we achieved a promising milestone to bring the war in Afghanistan to a responsible end with the signing of an agreement between the United States and the Taliban. It is a road map to peace, security and stability that, while fraught with many uncertainties, is supported by the Afghan government and our NATO allies. Thanks

to President Donald Trump's leadership, it is the best chance we have ever had to end this conflict, to ensure Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists who want to attack America and to bring our troops home.

Over the past week, we observed a significant reduction in violence in Afghanistan. This set the stage to approve a conditions-based agreement composed of four main parts: guarantees and mechanisms by the Taliban that will ensure Afghans will never be used by terrorists to launch attacks against the United States and its allies; a timeline for the withdrawal of U.S. and allied forces that commences in the next two weeks; the start of intra-Afghan negotiations within 10 days; and, the pursuit of a permanent and comprehensive cease-fire. Throughout this process, as I announced Saturday in Kabul alongside President Ashraf Ghani, the United States will continue its financial and military support to the Afghan government and its security forces. This drawdown is part of the plan's implementation, and the administration looks forward to briefing them to Congress in the coming days.

As this is a conditions-based agreement, if we assess that the Taliban is honoring the terms of the deal, the United States will reduce its military presence to 8,600 troops within a matter of months. This drawdown will be part of a NATO-approved plan for commensurate reductions by other troop-contributing nations. If progress on the political front between the Taliban and the current Afghan government continues, then the United States and its partners will further reduce our presence toward a goal of zero in 2021. If progress stalls, then our drawdown likely will be suspended, as well. At no time will we relinquish the

right of self-defense.

While we look forward with cautious optimism, we are prepared for every outcome. Should the Taliban renege on their obligations, they will bear full responsibility for forfeiting a chance for peace, economic opportunity and a role in deciding the future of the country. Given this possibility, we will retain the necessary capabilities to respond with decisive military force to protect our service members, support the Afghan security forces or restart offensive operations.

Ultimately, the success of this agreement will be up to the Afghan people. They have suffered too much for too long; they are a proud people who deserve better. That said, no one has any illusions that the road ahead will be easy. Afghanistan remains a complex country in a challenging region, and there are still many — including people from outside nations — who want the conflict to continue indefinitely for a variety of nefarious reasons. As I told our troops on Saturday: Remain vigilant; we still have a long and difficult mission ahead of us.

Thanks to the bravery, skill and commitment of U.S. service members and their allies, we are now at a point where a stable, secure and unified Afghanistan can become a reality. The almost 800,000 U.S. troops who have deployed there over the past 18 years should take pride in knowing their efforts kept America safe. And the more than 2,400 heroes who never made it home did not die in vain. Because of their sacrifice, America is now in a position to attack from Afghanistan since 9/11. This agreement is now the best chance we have to ensuring it never does again, while safely bringing our troops home.

Mark Esper is U.S. defense secretary.

## The sun likely won't last

By HUGH HEWITT  
Special to The Washington Post

Former Vice President Joe Biden handily won the South Carolina Democratic primary, but take a step back and the victory wasn't nearly as promising as his campaign might like to believe. Biden took a victory lap on the Sunday-morning talk shows — he's desperate to close the gap with Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., quickly — but look beyond his self-congratulations. It's not the win Biden needed.

What Biden had to have was a smashing repudiation of Sanders — not just of Sanders but of the entire field, dealing a crushing blow to the hopes of every other would-be nominee and prompting several to drop out. That didn't happen. Drawing well over 50% of the vote might have sent that message, but Biden fell short, with 48.4%. So he can chalk up a win in a state heavily tilted toward him in primary demographics but one that won't be in play in November. By contrast, Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada all could be up for grabs this fall, and Biden lost them badly.

Though heavily favored by much of the Palmisto State's large African American population, Biden gained only 61% of that demographic, according to exit polls. At first glance, that might seem more impressive than Sanders' 43% of the youth vote, but think about this: The black vote will account for only 12% of the November 2020 electorate; the youth vote (millennials and Gen Z combined) come in at 37%, according to Pew Research Center.

When President Donald Trump asked his Friday night rally to indicate by applause whether they'd rather he face Sanders or Biden, the crowd clearly preferred

a race against Sanders, which the president interpreted as their estimate of who would be easier to beat. That's their error. Though I favor a Trump-Sanders race, it isn't because the Vermont senator is the easiest Democrat to beat. Far from it.

But a contest between Trump and Sanders would be clarifying. The debate is overdue. Trump is the unlikely tribune of two main policies and a peace-through-strength military buildup, and he has surprised by crafting, along with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., a federal judiciary committed to the Constitution as intended by the framers, with subsequent amendments especially those that followed the Civil War. Sanders would represent a radical turning away from market economics, a vast expansion of an already towering federal debt and the embrace of class politics that America has always rejected. Then there would be his foreign policy. Trump has criticized U.S. allies, but Sanders would abandon them completely as he courted African American leadership in the world. The U.S. military would simply be slashed and burned.

The Manhattan-Beltway elites of both parties and the mainstream media don't want to see that confrontation. They fear further repudiation of their cloistered world view and disintermediation of their power. A head-on contest with a populist order, civil influence would be revived. A President Mike Bloomberg would accomplish the same. Both of them know and court the elites that first Trump and now Sanders so vocally spurn. Thus throughout 2019 Biden rally the talking heads and the old elites of the Democratic Party. But after three losses in a row in the first contests of the new year, his plurality win on

Saturday in a deep-red state came too late, in a too-tight race. Many hopefuls are likely to soldier on, hoping to arrive at the Milwaukee convention with enough delegates to use as leverage.

Biden may hang on too, amid a never-ending stream of gaffes. He was obliged even by the most supportive of his media to recant on Friday that, contrary to his claims three times in recent weeks, he had never been arrested while visiting South Africa in the 1970s to visit Nelson Mandela. Then last week there was the one in a Biden speech about meeting with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, who died in 1997, to hammer out an agreement on the Paris climate accord, which was signed in 2016, and his assertion in the Democratic debate that 150 million Americans had died of gun violence since 2007.

Yes, Trump engages in "truthful hyperbole," as former media mogul Conrad Black has branded him. But Biden's serial flops must disquiet Democrats: With Biden the gaffe machine, they would lose one of their best lines of attack on the president. Yet Trump enjoys jousting with reporters, while Biden hides from them. That doesn't bode well for Biden clearing the hurdles between now and November.

Super Tuesday is likely to put Sanders clearly back on top with many wins. No matter how Biden tries to spin it, if Sanders arrives in Milwaukee with a delegate lead, and with Pete Buttigieg (now out of the race) or Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren holding enough delegates to put Sanders over the top, the deal will be done on the first ballot.

Hugh Hewitt, a Washington Post contributing columnist, hosts a nationally syndicated radio show and is author of "The Fourth Way: The Conservative Playbook for a Lasting GOP Majority."



# Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons

FOR EXTRA (PRE-APPROVED) CREDIT, WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT GROUP HAS A RECORD—\$14 TRILLION DOLLARS IN PERSONAL DEBT?

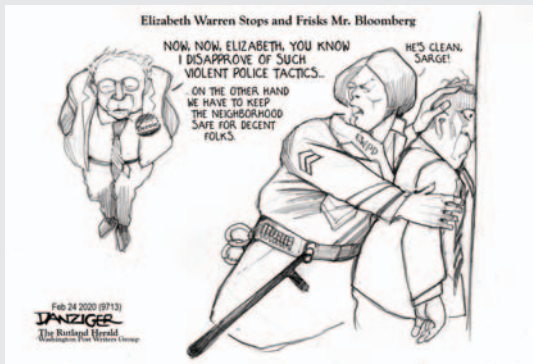


AMERICANS... IN A CLASS ALL BY THEMSELVES

TIM CAMPBELL/Washington Post News Service



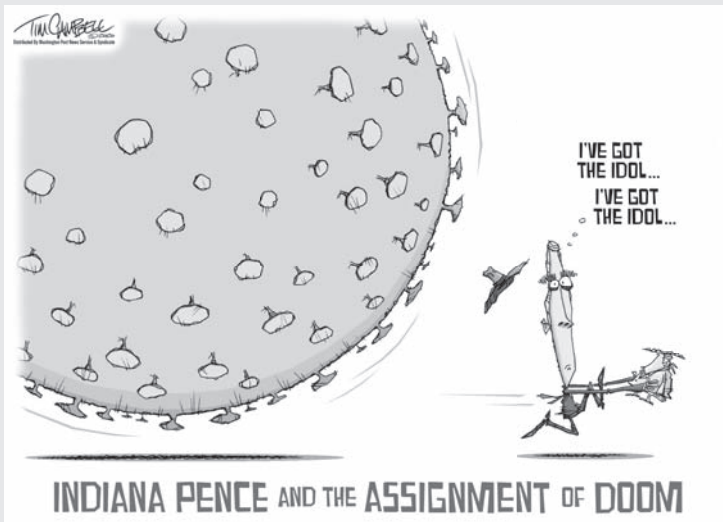
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JEFF DANZIGER/Washington Post News Service



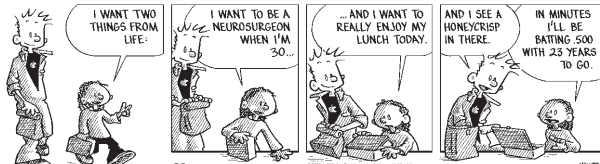
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INDIANA PENCE AND THE ASSIGNMENT OF DOOM

TIM CAMPBELL/Washington Post News Service

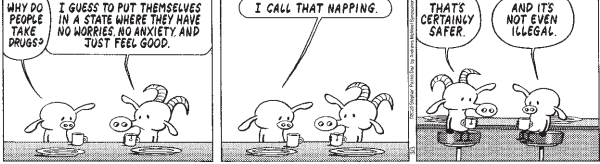
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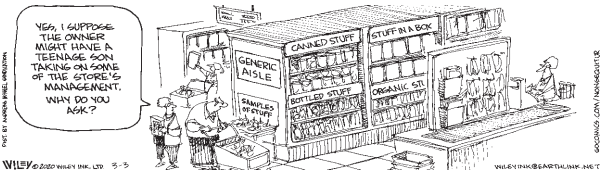
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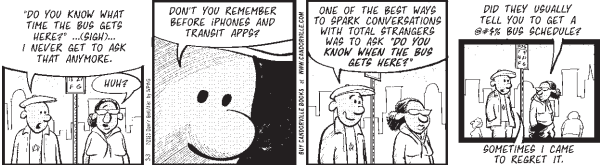
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



# Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	
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38	39							40	41				
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48										50			
51										53			

## ACROSS

- Gridlock sound
- 50-and-over org.
- Deli choice
- Wheel bar
- En-lai
- "Suits" network
- Object of an epic pursuit
- Tom Collins liquor
- Alliances
- Lindsay of "Mean Girls"
- Some Pacific salmon
- Floating ice mass
- Portent
- 26 Romper room
- 30 Genetic stuff
- 31 Attempts
- 32 100%
- 33 Laterally
- 35 L-Q bridge
- 36 Pace
- 37 "I — kick from champagne ..."
- 38 Dorm alternatives
- 40 Saharan
- 42 Felon's flight
- 43 Super-shiny, like paint
- 48 Census stat
- 49 One of HOMES
- 50 Rocker Clapton
- 51 Cooking fuel
- 52 Carvey or Delany
- 53 Bigfoot's cousin

## DOWN

- "Humbly"
- Outer (Pref.)
- Right angle
- Quarterback
- Manning
- Farm unit
- Cries of discovery
- King, in Cannes
- Grooved wheels
- "Love, Actually" actor
- 10 India's continent
- "Death in Venice" author
- 16 USO patrons
- 20 Mouths (Lat.)
- 21 Atlantic catches
- 22 High-end hotel chain
- 23 Psychological tactics
- 24 Cave creatures
- 26 Excellent, in slang
- 27 Myrna of movies
- 28 Carolina college
- 29 Dog food brand
- 31 Made a rustling noise
- 34 "Mangia!"
- 35 Musical mix
- 37 Showbiz job
- 38 Banner
- 39 Sitarist's music
- 40 Opposite of "fer"
- 41 Mother of Zeus
- 44 Playwright
- Levin
- 45 Raw mineral
- 46 Perch
- 47 High school subj.

## Answer to Previous Puzzle

P	A	L	E	E	A	T	C	O	P	S
A	M	E	N	A	B	L	E	O	B	I
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## 3-3

## CRYPTOQUIP

M W Z C Z E G P P H C C M R F Z  
P Z X O G M A Z O G H E Z B X M V J  
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MR CZW Z RFGXAHW RZR.  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: MEMORABLE  
SONGWRITER WHO HAD NUMEROUS NEAR  
MISSES WHEN HE WAS OUT DRIVING: SWERVING  
BERLIN.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: R equals T

# SCOREBOARD

## Sports on AFN

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules.  
myafn.net

## Auto racing

### Auto Club 400

#### NASCAR Monster Energy Cup

#### Auto Club Speedway

#### Fontana, Calif.

#### Las length: 200 miles

#### (Start position in parentheses)

1. (4) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 200 laps, 59 minutes.

2. (17) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 200, 40.

3. (4) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 200, 40.

4. (13) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 200, 40.

5. (13) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 200, 40.

6. (28) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 200, 40.

7. (2) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 200.

8. (6) Aric Almirola, Ford, 200, 36.

9. (9) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 200, 36.

10. (29) Erik Jones, Toyota, 200, 29.

11. (19) Tyler Reddick, Chevrolet, 200.

12. (7) Joey Logano, Ford, 200, 25.

13. (21) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 200.

14. (38) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 200, 29.

15. (21) William Byron, Chevrolet, 200.

16. (11) Chris Buescher, Ford, 200, 21.

17. (27) Ross Chastain, Ford, 200, 0.

18. (18) Cole Custer, Ford, 199, 15.

19. (16) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 199, 37.

20. (24) Justin Dillon, Chevrolet, 199.

21. (23) John H. Nemechek, Ford, 199.

22. (24) Ty Dillon, Chevrolet, 199, 11.

23. (14) Bobba Wallace, Chevrolet, 199.

24. (21) Daniel Suarez, Toyota, 199.

25. (26) Corey LaJoie, Ford, 197, 8.

26. (20) Ryan Preece, Chevrolet, 197, 3.

27. (4) Kelley Force, 197, 6.

28. (32) Brennan Poole, Chevrolet, 199.

29. (34) Joey Gase, Ford, 193, 0.

30. (26) Garrett Smithley, Ford, 193, 3.

31. (39) Ryan Houtz, Chevrolet, 192, 2.

32. (33) Reid Sorenson, Chevrolet, 191.

33. (27) Timmy Hill, Ford, 184, 0.

34. (10) Christopher Bell, Toyota, engine, 80.

1. **Rate Statistics**

Average Speed of Race Winner: 152.75 mph.

Caution Flags: 2 hours, 37 minutes, 7 seconds.

Number of Victory: 8,904 seconds.

Caution Flags: 13 for 13 seconds.

Lead Changes: 16 among 8 drivers.

Lap Leaders: C. Bowyer 10, A. Bowman 12.

1-29: R. Stenhouse 30, A. Bowman 36.

30-33: Johnson 64-68, R. Blaney 69-70.

Johnson 71; R. Blaney 72-91; W. Byron 92.

R. Blaney 93-123; Johnson 124-127.

128-130: A. Bowman 129; M. Truex 131-132.

A. Bowman 133-160; K. Keselowski 161-166.

167-170: Bowman 171-176.

177-180: Bowman 181-186.

187-190: Bowman 191-196.

197-199: Bowman 200.

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## NFL

# Speed thrills on final day of scouting combine

## DB Guidry's 4.29-second 40-yard dash sets pace

By MICHAEL MAROT  
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — College football's top players turned the NFL's annual scouting combine into speed week.

Running back Jonathan Taylor promised to run the 40-yard dash in under 4.4 seconds. He did. Receiver Henry Ruggs III came, literally, a few ticks away from matching the fastest time recorded in the event's 35-year history. Linebacker Isaiah Simmons showed he had receiver-type speed on Saturday, and even the big men turned heads with their fleet feet.

On Sunday, the trend continued with cornerback Javelin Guidry of Utah clocking a 4.29 — the best on the final day of workouts in Indianapolis and tied for third-best among defensive backs since 2003. Only Jalen Myrick of Minnesota in 2017 and Stanford Routt in 2005 posted faster times.

"It was a 4.28 at a Texas camp my sophomore year," Guidry said earlier this week when asked what his fastest 40 was. "I really focused on it (track) when we moved to Texas. Coach Larry Weathers in Austin, he really put it on me to focus on track and running and DB drills as well. He's a DB coach, but running was the main thing."

Guidry did more than that in Indy. He also posted 21 reps on the 225-pound bench press, tied for fifth among defensive backs.

Jeff Okudah, widely considered the best cornerback in April's draft, didn't have the kind of day he expected.

The former Ohio State player did only 11 reps on the bench press and posted a 4.48 in the 40 before hitting the Lucas Oil Stadium turf while trying to make a spinning catch during one drill. He complained of head and neck soreness, sat out some of the workout, before returning to deliver the best broad jump of the day at 11 feet, 3



CHARLIE NEIBERGER/AP

**Utah defensive back Javelin K. Guidry clocked a 4.29 time in the 40-yard dash on Sunday at the NFL scouting combine, tops on the final day of workouts in Indianapolis and tied for third-best among defensive backs since 2003.**

inches and a 41-inch vertical jump.

"It's always going to be risk-reward," he said before working out. "You chose if you're going to get the reward or if you're going to get the risk."

### Risers

**Tristan Wirfs:** At 6-foot-5, 322 pounds, Iowa's former offensive tackle might not look like the most athletically gifted player. But he posted a better vertical jump (36.5 inches) than two of the draft's top receivers — Jerry Jeudy (35) and CeeDee Lamb (34-5). He also won three prep state championships in the discus, two in the shot put and was an elite swimmer by age 6.

**Isaiah Simmons:** The former Clemson linebacker started this week as a potential top-10 pick. He helped himself by running a 4.39-second in the 40, matching Taylor's time and finishing ahead of all but six receivers. He also had the second-best broad jump (11 feet) and tied for third-best vertical jump (39 inches) among linebackers.

**Jonathan Taylor:** The fastest running back in Indianapolis also measured in bigger than his two nearest competitors, J.K. Dobbins of Ohio State and D'Andre Swift of Georgia, to be the first runner selected. He outran Swift in the 40 (4.48) with a 4.39, and posted better numbers in the vertical jump and broad jump than Swift, too. An injured ankle, meanwhile, limited Dobbins to only the bench press. Dobbins had 23 reps compared with 17 for Taylor.

**Mekhi Becton:** A massive 364-pound offensive tackle from Louisville raised eyebrows with a stunning 5.11 in the 40 but may have raised questions with only 23 reps. He tied for 25th among the 39 offensive linemen who lifted — and had two fewer than punter Michael Turk of Arizona State. Next up: Perhaps seeing Becton board a boat at the Bellagio on draft weekend.

**Kyle Dugger:** The only Division II player in Indy thought he would run in the 4.3's. Instead, his two attempts came in at 4.50

### DID YOU KNOW?

Combine organizers adopted 16 new drills this year, while ditching a few old ones to keep up with the evolution of football. Those who watched and participated appreciated the new look and the hope it might encourage more players to participate in future years. Meanwhile, the combine's revamped schedule got mixed reviews. While the early mornings and late nights have been part of the process for years, the long gap between media interviews and workouts did not make for compelling afternoon television.

SOURCE: Associated Press

and 4.51, good enough to stay among the top-rated safeties. Plus, he had a 42-inch vertical jump, the best among defensive backs, and the third-best broad jump at 11-feet, 2-inches.

### Sliders

**Zack Moss:** Of the 28 running backs who competed in the vertical jump, the former Utah player had the seventh worst mark at 33 inches. Worse yet, he hurt his hamstring. Though Moss showed toughness by continuing, he probably should have stopped rather than run a 4.65-second 40, tied for fourth-slowest in the position group.

**Laviska Shenault Jr.:** The 6-foot-1, 227-pound former Colorado receiver played most of last season with a core muscle injury. Only Shenault really knows how much it hurt him at the combine. After posting a less-than-scintillating 4.58-second run Thursday, NFL Network reported he intended to have surgery. The recovery time is expected to be four to eight weeks.

**Mitchell Wilcox:** Everyone saw the Florida Atlantic tight end get hit in the face by a ball in the gauntlet drill. He never completely recovered from that embarrassing moment, struggling to make catches in other drills, running the third-slowest 40 among tight ends (4.88) and the second worst vertical jump (31).

## Disgruntled pass rusher Ngakoue wants out of Jacksonville

By MARK LONG  
Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Standout defensive end Yannick Ngakoue no longer wants to sign a long-term deal with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Ngakoue announced his desire to play elsewhere via social media Monday, a move that could force Jacksonville to place the franchise tag on the 24-year-old disgruntled defender and trade him.

"The Jaguars are aware I no longer have interest in signing a long term contract in Jacksonville," Ngakoue posted on Twitter and Instagram. "Duvall, I love you and gave you guys everything I got. I'm thankful for the journey and look forward to continuing my career elsewhere."

Ngakoue has 37½ sacks and 14 forced fumbles in four seasons. The speedy strip-sack specialist made the Pro Bowl in 2017 and was an alternate the last two seasons.

A third-round draft pick from Maryland in 2016, Ngakoue



JOHN RAOUX/AP

**Jacksonville Jaguars defensive end Yannick Ngakoue announced on social media Monday that he no longer wants to sign a long-term deal with the team.**

clearly outplayed his \$3.84 million rookie contract. He made \$2.025 million in 2019 — far less than other top playmakers at his

**"We're going to try to get him here and keep him here one way or another. So I think I'll leave it at that."**

Dave Caldwell

Jaguars general manager, on 24-year-old defensive end Yannick Ngakoue

position.

He had been seeking around \$22 million a year to remain in Jacksonville, but the Jaguars don't seem to consider him a complete or elite defensive end worthy of that much annually. Jacksonville also selected Ngakoue's potential replacement, Josh Allen from Kentucky, with the seventh overall pick in the 2019 NFL draft. Allen had 44 tackles, 10½ sacks and two forced fumbles as a rookie and made the Pro Bowl as an alternate.

Jacksonville is expected to place the franchise tag on Ngakoue, a move that would guarantee him more than \$19 million in 2020. But he also could refuse to sign the tender, essentially forcing a trade.

"There's still a process that needs to be played, but I think you

guys know how we feel about him and we want him here," Jaguars general manager Dave Caldwell said at the NFL combine last week. "We're going to try to get him here and keep him here one way or another. So I think I'll leave it at that."

If the Jaguars end up trading Ngakoue, they would be left with few pieces from their dynamic defense that carried the team to the AFC championship game in January 2018.

Defensive end Calais Campbell, cornerback A.J. Bouye and linebacker Myles Jack remain. But there are no guarantees Campbell and Bouye will stick around since they would count nearly \$33 million combined against the salary cap next season.

Cornerback Jalen Ramsey and defensive end Dante Fowler

were traded in separate deals to the Los Angeles Rams. Safety Tashaun Gipson and defensive tackle Malik Jackson were released before the 2019 season in a cost-saving move.

Linebacker Telvin Smith abruptly quit the team last May to "get my world in order" and eventually filed retirement paperwork to avoid mounting fines.

And Jacksonville recently declined to pick up a team option in defensive tackle Marcell Dareus' contract, saving \$19.5 million against the cap in 2020. Dareus will still count \$2.5 million against the cap in dead money.

"He would still be a guy that we would have interest in bringing back at some point in time," Caldwell said last week.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## NHL

## Scoreboard

## Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	66	41	13	12	94	218	167
Tampa Bay	65	41	19	5	87	230	183
Toronto	66	35	23	8	78	233	218
Florida	66	33	26	7	73	224	224
Montreal	67	30	28	9	69	203	207
Buffalo	65	29	28	8	66	188	205
Ottawa	66	23	31	12	58	176	224
Detroit	67	15	47	5	35	135	255

Metropolitan Division							
Washington	65	40	19	6	86	226	199
Philadelphia	65	38	20	7	83	220	190
Pittsburgh	64	37	21	6	80	204	178
N.Y. Islanders	64	35	21	8	78	181	175
Columbus	67	32	21	14	78	175	179
Carolina	64	35	24	5	75	207	183
N.Y. Rangers	65	35	26	4	74	217	203
New Jersey	65	26	27	12	64	177	216

## Western Conference

Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	66	39	17	10	88	213	184
Colorado	64	39	18	7	85	221	172
Dallas	65	37	21	7	81	177	168
Nashville	64	32	24	8	72	204	204
Winnipeg	67	33	28	6	72	201	198
Minnesota	65	32	26	7	71	206	205
Chicago	65	29	28	8	66	195	207

Pacific Division							
Vegas	67	36	23	8	80	216	202
Edmonton	65	34	23	8	76	204	201
Calgary	67	34	26	7	75	201	206
Vancouver	65	34	25	6	74	214	204
Arizona	67	32	27	8	72	187	178
San Jose	65	28	33	4	60	169	209
Anaheim	65	26	31	8	60	168	205
Los Angeles	66	25	35	6	56	164	206

**Note:** Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

**Saturday's games**  
 Boston 4, N.Y. Islanders 0  
 Los Angeles 2, New Jersey 1, OT  
 Tampa Bay 4, Calgary 3  
 Chicago 3, Florida 2, SO  
 Colorado 3, Nashville 2  
 Toronto 4, Vancouver 2  
 Ottawa 4, Carolina 3, OT  
 St. Louis 4, Dallas 3, SO  
 Edmonton 2, Winnipeg 2  
 San Jose 5, Pittsburgh 0

**Sunday's games**  
 Philadelphia 5, N.Y. Rangers 3  
 Calgary 3, Florida 0  
 Washington 5, Vancouver 3  
 New Jersey 3, Anaheim 0  
 Washington 4, Minnesota 3  
 Carolina 3, Vegas 1

**Monday's games**  
 Colorado at Detroit  
 Edmonton at Nashville  
 Toronto at Chicago  
 Montreal at N.Y. Islanders  
 Ottawa at Pittsburgh  
 St. Louis at N.Y. Rangers  
 Boston at Tampa Bay  
 Buffalo at Winnipeg  
 Nashville at Minnesota  
 Seattle at Chicago  
 Edmonton at Dallas  
 New Jersey at Vegas  
 Toronto at San Jose

**Wednesday's games**  
 Philadelphia at Washington  
 Columbus at Calgary  
 Colorado at Colorado  
 Arizona at Vancouver

## Ovechkin, Caps shut door on slump

## He scores twice in 4-3 win over Wild

By MIKE COOK  
 Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Alex Ovechkin scored twice as part of a three-point night and the Washington Capitals ended a season-high four-game road slide by holding off the Minnesota Wild 4-3 on Sunday night.

Richard Panik and Tom Wilson also scored, Evgeny Kuznetsov had two assists, and Braden Holtby stopped 37 shots for his fourth straight victory. Washington moved into a tie with Colorado for the league lead with 22 road wins.

"Lots of good things happened tonight, and we'll take the two points on the road," Capitals coach Todd Reirden said. "We're definitely a work in progress."

Washington has won six straight games at Xcel Energy Center since March 19, 2013.

"I don't know, I think guys get emotional here because lots of guys from here," Ovechkin said. "You can feel it in the locker room. Everybody gets excited and you take the energy from your teammates."

Ryan Donato, Kevin Fiala and Zach Parise scored for the Wild. Alex Stalock made 26 saves, but Minnesota lost for the first time in four games and remains one point behind Nashville, Winnipeg and Arizona for the second wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

"It was really quiet after the game, really disappointed, obviously, that we didn't get the outcome," Minnesota interim coach Dean Evason said. "I think we



HANNAH FOSLIE/AP

Washington Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin of Russia, left, shoots the puck as Minnesota Wild defenseman Jared Spurgeon, right, defends during the Capitals' 4-3 win Sunday in St. Paul, Minn.

believe, and we know we're a good hockey club, and if we bring it every night, then, yeah, we can play with anybody."

It certainly would help to have one of the best players ever.

Ovechkin, who has seven games of at least three points this season, scored twice in a first-period surge that saw the Capitals turn a 1-0 deficit into a 3-1 lead in 3 minutes, 38 seconds.

With a two-man advantage, Ovechkin ripped home a slap shot from the top of the left circle, the first power-play goal allowed by the Wild in 10 games, a span of 21 straight kills.

"They capitalized on their chances," said Stalock, whose

high-sticking penalty gave Washington a 5-on-3 for 78 seconds. "They got a guy that has over 700 goals and when he gets the puck, he gets chances. He's going to make good shots."

Panik beat Stalock with a wrist shot 3 minutes later, and Ovechkin hammered home a feed from Kuznetsov 31 seconds after that, leading to a chant of "Ovi, Ovi" from the contingent of lower-deck fans at that end of the arena wearing red.

Ovechkin now has 356 career regular-season road goals, surpassing Jaromir Jagr for third-most in league history. Only Wayne Gretzky (402) and Steve Yzerman (362) had more. Ovech-

kin also passed Phil Esposito for fifth all-time with his 144th career multi-goal game.

Fiala got the Wild within 3-2 before the period ended. He is on an Ovechkin-like run with goals in four straight games and 11 in 14.

Wilson made it 4-2 for Washington 40 seconds into the third period on a feed from Ovechkin after Kuznetsov thwarted an attempted clear by Ryan Suter. Wilson has four goals in six games.

"It's a great play from O," Wilson said. "I think it shows what type of teammate he is. He's got the puck right in the slot, chance for a hat trick and he dishes it off."

## Roundup

## Flyers' win streak hits six with victory over Rangers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Carter Hart made 23 saves and the surging Philadelphia Flyers extended their winning streak to a season-high six games with a 5-3 victory over the New York Rangers on Sunday.

Matt Niskanen, Sean Couturier and Travis Konecny each scored power-play goals. Michael Raffl scored short-handed and Derek Grant also tallied for the Flyers, who swept a home-and-home series against the Rangers after winning 5-2 on Friday night.

"We knew they were going to come out hard and try and respond here to the game on Friday," Hart said. "We just had to stick to our plan, stick to the way we play and just compete."

Philadelphia's run combined with the Penguins' six-game slide has moved the Flyers into second place in the Metropolitan Division.

Henrik Lundqvist made his first start since Feb. 3 and made 21 saves for New York.

Mika Zibanejad scored two power-play goals and Pavel Buchnevich also tallied



SETH WENIG/AP

Flyers goaltender Carter Hart keeps an eye on the puck during the second period against the Rangers on Sunday.

on the man advantage for the Rangers. Zibanejad has a career-high 32 goals on the season.

**Kings 4, Golden Knights 1:** Anze Kopitar scored twice, rookie Calvin Petersen made 42 saves and Los Angeles improved to 6-2-1 in its last nine games with a win at Vegas.

The Kings, in last place in the Pacific Division, snapped the Golden Knights' franchise record-tying win streak at eight games. Vegas hadn't lost since a 4-0 defeat in Minnesota on Feb. 11.

Petersen, who improved to 2-0-0 against the Golden Knights, was brilliant in stifling a normally potent offense that clearly was missing Mark Stone, who is week-to-week with a lower-body injury. Of his 42 stops, 19 came in the third period.

**Devils 3, Ducks 0:** Pavel Zacha scored two power-play goals and Cory Schneider made 34 saves for his first shutout in more than a year to lift New Jersey to the win at Anaheim.

Nico Hischier had a goal, Nikita Gusev had an assist to extend his point streak to six games, and the Devils extended their streak of games earning a point to six. New Jersey is 4-0-2 in that span.

Schneider's shutout was the 26th of his career, and his first since Feb. 21, 2019, against Ottawa.

John Gibson made 31 saves for the Ducks, who could not put together their second three-game winning streak of the season.

**Blue Jackets 5, Canucks 3:** Zach Werenski and Emil Bemstrom scored on power plays during host Columbus' four-goal, third-period rally and the slumping Blue Jackets stunned Vancouver.

Riley Nash and Gustav Nyquist also scored in the third period for Columbus, which ended a two-game skid and moved three points ahead of Carolina for the second Eastern Conference wild card. It was the Blue Jackets' first regulation win since Feb. 7 and their second victory in 11 games.

Bo Horvat, Elias Pettersson and J.T. Miller scored for the Canucks, and Louis Domingue stopped 30 shots in his first appearance since being acquired from New Jersey at the trade deadline. Vancouver has dropped three in a row and six of its last seven games on the road.

**Flames 3, Panthers 0:** Cam Talbot made 38 saves, and Johnny Gaudreau had a goal and an assist to lead Calgary to a win at Florida.

Ty Brodie and Milan Lucic also scored for the Flames, and Mark Giordano had three assists.

NBA



RUSTY COSTANZA/AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James, right, reaches for the ball as New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson drives to the basket. Williamson had 35 points and seven rebounds and James had 34 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds in the Lakers' 122-114 win Sunday in New Orleans.

# LeBron too much for Pelicans, Zion

By BRETT MARTEL  
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — LeBron James keeps finding ways to assert his supremacy over the upstart New Orleans Pelicans and rookie sensation Zion Williamson — with or without the help of fellow Lakers All-Star Anthony Davis.

James had 34 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds, and Los Angeles overcame both Davis' absence and Williamson's highest-scoring game to beat New Orleans 122-114 on Sunday night.

"Obviously, spectacular performance by LeBron James," Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. "His shot-making was ridiculous from both in the post, with turnaround jump shots, and at the three-point line."

"When they brought double-teams, he is one of the best passers in the league," Vogel added. "He showed it tonight and picked their defense apart."

Williamson finished with 35 points, but his largely productive and highlight-filled night was marred somewhat by six turnovers.

Kyle Kuzma scored 20, including a corner three-pointer set up by James that put Los Angeles up 113-109 with 3:40 to go. The Lakers gradually pulled away after that, aided by James' three with 2:27 left.

"He is who he is — incred-

ible player," Williamson said of James. "I give respect when it's due. He hit a big shot and it helped them seal the game."

Davis, who spent the first seven of his eight seasons with the Pelicans, sat out with a sore right knee, one night after playing in Los Angeles' 105-88 loss at Memphis. His injury did not appear too serious; he was on the bench in street clothes and routinely reacted to the action on the court by springing out of his seat and standing on the sideline.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 13 and JaVale McGehee asserted himself inside with six blocked shots and eight points, including his layup in the final minute that made it 120-112.

"We had one of the best players in the league out tonight; that is what makes the win feel that much better," Vogel said. "Kuz was great and our bigs were great. A lot of guys contributed on the perimeter, in particular on the defensive end. ... Just a heck of a win for us."

James punished New Orleans on consecutive possessions in the fourth quarter when double-teams arrived late, beating guard and former teammate Josh Hart with explosive dribble drives for a dunk and a layup. His dominance served as an emphatic end to his season-high 40 points in a victory over the Pelicans six days earlier in Los Angeles.

## Scoreboard

### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct
Toronto	42	18	.700
Boston	41	18	.695 1/2
Philadelphia	37	24	.607 5/8
Brooklyn	26	33	.441 15/16
New York	18	42	.300 2/3
Southeast Division			
	W	L	Pct
Miami	38	22	.633
Orlando	27	33	.450 1/2
Washington	22	37	.373 15/16
Charlotte	21	39	.350 1/2
Atlanta	19	43	.306 2/3
Central Division			
	W	L	Pct
x-Milwaukee	52	8	.867 —
Indiana	36	24	.600 1/2
Chicago	40	30	.573 3/4
New Orleans	20	42	.323 3/32
Detroit	17	43	.283 3/5
Cleveland	17	43	.283 3/5

### Western Conference

Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Houston	39	20	.661 1/2
Dallas	37	24	.607 5/8
Memphis	29	31	.483 10/16
San Antonio	26	34	.433 13/16
Golden State	25	33	.431 13/16
Northwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Denver	41	19	.683 1/2
Utah	37	22	.627 3/4
Oklahoma City	37	23	.617 4/5
Portland	26	35	.426 15/16
Minnesota	17	42	.288 2/3
Pacific Division			
	W	L	Pct
L.A. Lakers	46	13	.780 —
L.A. Clippers	41	19	.683 1/2
Sacramento	26	34	.433 20/21
Phoenix	24	37	.393 2/3
Golden State	13	48	.213 3/4

Saturday's games	
New York 125, Chicago 115	
Atlanta 129, Portland 117	
Miami 116, Brooklyn 113	
Indiana 113, Cleveland 104	
Memphis 105, L.A. Lakers 88	
San Antonio 114, Orlando 113	
Houston 111, Boston 110	
Golden State 115, Phoenix 99	

Sunday's games	
Milwaukee 95, Charlotte 85	
Dallas 111, Minnesota 91	
L.A. Clippers 136, Philadelphia 130	
Sacramento 106, Detroit 100	
Denver 133, Toronto 118	
L.A. Lakers 122, New Orleans 114	
Washington 124, Golden State 110	

Monday's games	
Houston at New York	
Indiana at San Antonio	
Utah at Cleveland	
Memphis at Atlanta	
Milwaukee at Miami	
Dallas at Chicago	
San Antonio at Oklahoma City	

Tuesday's games	
Brooklyn at Boston	
San Antonio at Oklahoma City	
Minnesota at New Orleans	
Golden State at Denver	
Toronto at Phoenix	
Philadelphia at L.A. Lakers	
Washington at Sacramento	

## Roundup

# Porzingis steps up, lifts Mavs past Timberwolves

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Being without All-Star guard Luka Doncic for 13 games this season, the Dallas Mavericks have discovered how to stay successful without their leading scorer and assist man.

Lean on Kristaps Porzingis. Porzingis tied a season high with 38 points, Seth Curry scored 27 and Dallas rolled to a 111-91 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Sunday afternoon with Doncic sitting out with a left thumb sprain.

Porzingis added 13 rebounds and five assists, while also connecting on a career high-tying six three-pointers. He's the only player in NBA history with at least 35 points, 10 rebounds, five blocks and five made threes in a game, according to Basketball Reference. It's the second time he's accomplished the feat.

"The 38 points tells about a quarter of the story of what he did in this game," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. "Defensively, he was phenomenal. Changing shots, blocking shots, rebounding the ball, deflecting, saving balls. It was a defensive clinic."

Porzingis scored 22 points in the first half as Dallas led by 20 points and never looked back. Tim Hardaway Jr. added 19 points as the Mavericks won for the third time in four games.

D'Angelo Russell had 16 points, nine rebounds and seven assists, but Minnesota lost for the 20th time in 22 games.

"Where we are, we've got to come out with a more competitive mindset early on, especially against these teams like Dallas, who's an execution-based team who's been together," Timberwolves coach Ryan Saunders said.

Minnesota missed 10 of its first 11 shots, while Porzingis got started early. He scored 10 of the Mavericks' first 19 points and had three blocks in the first half.

**Bucks 93, Hornets 85:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 41 points, 20 rebounds and six assists and Milwaukee won at Charlotte for its sixth straight victory.

Brook Lopez added 16 points and seven rebounds for the NBA-leading Bucks. They've won 20 of their last 22 games and to improve to 52-8.

Antetokounmpo scored in almost every way imaginable — on pick-and-rolls, fast-break dunks, fadeaway jumpers and from the foul line.

Antetokounmpo finished a rebound short of his career high. The Bucks outrebounded the Hornets 61-47.

DeVonte Graham had 17 points for Charlotte.

**Clippers 136, 76ers 130:** Kawhi Leonard scored 30 points, Paul George added 24 and host Los Angeles beat Philadelphia to extended its winning streak to four.

Reserves Montrezl Harrell and Lou Williams also had 24 points.



STACY BENSA/AP

Dallas Mavericks forward Kristaps Porzingis shoots over Minnesota Timberwolves forward Juancho Hernangomez. Porzingis had a season-high 38 points in a 111-91 win Sunday in Minneapolis.

The Clippers — who shot 59.2% from the field — trailed by two at halftime but took control in the third quarter, outscoring the Sixers 38-24.

Shake Milton led Philadelphia with 39 points, hitting seven three-pointers. The first-year guard had 26 points in the first half, which tied a team season high. Former Clippers forward Tobias Harris had 25 points and Alec Burks 15.

**Nuggets 133, Raptors 118:** Nikola Jokic had 23 points, 18 rebounds and 11 assists for his 12th triple-double of the season to lead host Denver past short-handed Toronto.

Jokic has 43 triple-doubles in his short career, completing his latest by feeding Jerami Grant on a dunk that helped the Nuggets hand the defending champion Raptors their third straight loss.

Grant finished with 16 points, Toronto playing without Serge Ibaka and Fred VanVleet for a second straight game, but got a career night from OG Anunoby. He had 32 points on 12-for-16 shooting.

**Wizards 124, Warriors 110:** Bradley Beal had 34 points, eight assists and a season-best five steals and Washington won at Golden State for the first time in six years.

Beal has scored at least 25 points in a franchise-record 18 straight games.

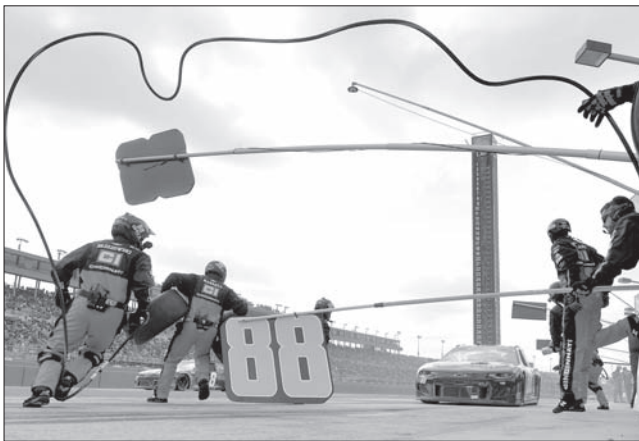
Andrew Wiggins scored 27 points for the Warriors, who have lost nine straight at home.

**Kings 109, Pistons 100:** De'Aaron Fox scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and host Sacramento overcame a 17-point deficit to beat Detroit.

Buddy Hield added 19 points, Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 15 and Harrison Barnes had 10 points and eight rebounds for the Kings. Sacramento has won four of five since the All-Star break.



# AUTO RACING/GOLF



PHOTOS BY WILL LESTER/AP

Above: Alex Bowman pits under yellow during the second stage of a NASCAR Cup Series race Sunday in Fontana, Calif. Below: Bowman celebrates with the checkered flag after winning the race.

## Bowman holds off Busches at Fontana for second Cup win

By GREG BEACHAM  
Associated Press

FONTANA, Calif. — Before Alex Bowman started looking for tattoo shops somewhere between Los Angeles and Phoenix, he celebrated a win that suggested even more permanent success ahead for the hard-working driver and his resurgent team.

Bowman raced to his second career NASCAR Cup Series victory Sunday, holding off Kyle and Kurt Busch at Fontana.

The win was the culmination of a tremendously encouraging weekend for Bowman, who has run 156 Cup races without extraordinary success. He is in the final year of his contract with Hendrick Motorsports.

But his No. 88 Chevrolet felt like the fastest car on this weathered, wide asphalt from the moment they unloaded — and Bowman decisively proved he knew what to do with it.

"We've been so good to start this season," Bowman said. "We've got to go win a bunch more, but man, it feels good to have one this early."

Bowman's future might be uncertain, but he's fine with it after this dominant performance at Fontana. He led 110 laps and managed to stay out front after the final pit stops before cruising to the checkered flag in a smooth, fairly uneventful race featuring only one caution outside of the stage breaks.

"There's never a situation that I feel completely comfortable in," Bowman said. "I feel like if somebody doesn't want to drive their race car, you're not going to be driving it. Hendrick Motorsports is where I want to be. It's where I want to stay for the rest of my career. It's where I've always



### Jimmie's farewell

Six-time Fontana champion Jimmie Johnson finished seventh after running near the front for most of his final race as a full-time driver at the NASCAR track closest to his native El Cajon, Calif., about 100 miles away. His winless streak is at a career-worst 98 races, but he showed impressive pace before his Hendrick teammate took charge of the race.

"Our team is going in the right direction," Johnson said. "We just faded too much at the end. I thought I was going to blow a tire, but we salvaged a top 10 out of it. It's a huge thing for us out here in California. There's been great vibes the whole weekend."

Johnson started on the front row at the track where he has won more than any other driver, starting with his first career Cup win in 2002.

The weekend featured several tributes to the seven-time series champion, including a five-wide salute during the warmup laps. Johnson's wife and daughters waved the green flag to start the race.

"It was super special for me," Johnson said.

### Misbehavior

Daytona 500 champion Denny Hamlin finished third after starting at the back when he changed a shock absorber before the start. Hamlin then pit Kyle Larson into the wall during the first stage with a bump from behind, and Larson needed significant repairs.

The crew chiefs of Ricky Stenhouse Jr. and Ryan Preece were ejected after NASCAR found illegal body modifications on the cars, which had to drop to the rear on the pace laps.

## With virus on mind, Korea's Im wins at the Honda Classic

By TIM REYNOLDS  
Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Moments after getting his first career PGA Tour win, Sungjae Im took a moment to reflect on what it means.

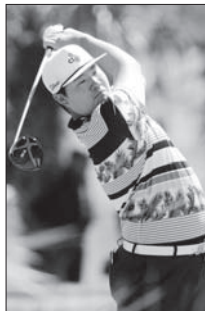
Not for himself — for his homeland, and for those dealing with a virus that has the world on edge.

The 21-year-old South Korean started fast and finished stronger Sunday, winning the Honda Classic by one shot over Mackenzie Hughes and two over Tommy Fleetwood for his first victory in 53 tries on tour. But before he could be whisked back to the course to collect the trophy, Im made sure to speak out about the coronavirus and tell those in South Korea — where nearly 4,000 cases have been confirmed — that he was thinking of them.

"Over in Korea right now, I know a lot of people are dealing with the coronavirus," Im said. "And it's kind of a huge deal with everybody. But I'm just glad as a Korean player that I can deliver some good news to the countrymen back home ... to do something for the country and make everybody proud."

Im shot a 4-under 66 on Sunday, finishing at 6 under to match the second-highest winning score since the Honda moved to PGA National in 2007. He was the tour's rookie of the year last season, plus has played more tournaments and more rounds than anyone since the 2018-19 season began nearly a year and a half ago.

And now, he's a winner, picking



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

Sungjae Im of South Korea won the Honda Classic in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., by one shot Sunday over Mackenzie Hughes.

up \$1.26 million this week and becoming the Honda's 10th international champion in the last 16 seasons.

Im birdied four of his first five holes, then birdied two of the final four to finish off the victory.

Hughes, a Canadian who made the cut on the number Friday, shot his second consecutive 66. Playing alongside Im, he was part of some serious fireworks on the last two holes and missed a birdie putt at the par-5 finishing hole that would have gotten him into a tie for the top spot.

"I love being in the mix," Hughes said.

## Langer rallies to win 41st PGA Tour Champions title

Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — Bernhard Langer took another step closer to the PGA Tour Champions victory record by closing with an 8-under 65 to turn a four-shot deficit into a two-shot win in the Cologuard Classic.

Langer was flawless until the final hole at Tucson National. He made nine birdies in 17 holes to seize control Sunday, and he wound up two shots ahead of Woody Austin.

Langer won for the 41st time on the 50-and-older circuit. Hale Irwin holds the PGA Tour Champions record with 45 victories, the last one coming in 2007.

That was the year Langer was eligible for the senior circuit. The 62-year-old German now has gone 14 consecutive seasons with at least one victory.

"I feel if I can play my best, I can win out there," Langer said. "I can't play at 80%. There's too many good players nowadays that will lap me if I don't play my best."

He was good enough at Tucson National. It is good enough to catch Irwin?

"I don't think about it," Langer said with a smile. "But I get reminded of it just about every week. One closer. We don't live and die for records, but it's fun to have a couple of them."

Langer finished at 18-under 201, and moved to the top of the Charles Schwab Cup standings.

Brett Quirley began the final round with a three-shot lead and was still in the mix until a double bogey on the par-5 12th hole. He closed with a 73 and tied for third with Rod Pampling.

## BASEBALL

# Pitchers return to the mound after being on the mend

Associated Press

Lance McCullers struck out Paul Goldschmidt on a curveball, then looked toward the Houston dugout.

That was enough on this day. After being out of the game for more than a year, 16 pitches were plenty Sunday.

McCullers, an Astros starter, and Corey Kluber of the Texas Rangers pitched Sunday after a long absence because of injuries.

New York Mets ace Jacob deGrom, another key starter, albeit one who was healthy last season, also made his spring debut.

Sidelined since having Tommy John surgery in November 2018, McCullers started in a spring training game against St. Louis and faced three batters. He retired leadoff man Kolten Wong on a soft comebacker, gave up a double to Paul DeJong and fanned Goldschmidt with an 84 mph curve.

"Out of the 16 pitches I threw, really only maybe one or two that I didn't execute the way I was hoping to pre-pitch," McCullers said. "Really happy with just the way I felt overall and just being out there with the guys."

McCullers' fastball reached 94 mph on the scoreboard radar gun. His signature pitch is the curve. "It's been the easiest to get the feel back for," he said. "I'm still working on my four-seam, trying to get the four-seam back. I was happy with the way I was moving it around today in the zone."

McCullers' healthy return to the starting rotation is a priority for the Astros, so they're being cautious.

Justin Verlander and Zack Greinke provide a formidable duo at the top of the rotation. With the departure of free agents Gerrit Cole (New York Yankees) and Wade Miley (Cincinnati), McCullers figures to fill the third spot in the rotation.

Several candidates, none of whom have started more than eight major league games in a season, are competing for the

final two spots.

A 26-year-old righty, McCullers has started 22 games three times during his four MLB seasons, but never more than that. He posted a 7-4 record with a 4.25 ERA during Houston's 2017 championship season, a title tainted by the Astros' sign-stealing scheme.

McCullers' previous outing against big league hitters was in relief on Oct. 17, 2018, in the AL Championship Series against Boston.

"He was smooth with his delivery," manager Dusty Baker said following Houston's 5-4 victory. "He wasn't overthrowing, which I thought he might do from not being out there."

## Kluber goes 3 innings

Texas newcomer Kluber faced hitters for the first time since a line drive broke his pitching arm last May with Cleveland, working three innings and allowing two runs on two hits and two walks and striking out four. Kluber, 25, said he didn't feel any differently.

"Maybe a little bit beforehand," the right-hander said Sunday after throwing three innings against the Los Angeles Dodgers. "But once you get out there and start stretching, playing catch, getting loose in the bullpen, all that stuff kinda goes away."

"It just turns into another start, whether it's the regular season or spring training. That's kind of how everything usually goes for me."

## deGrom solid in return

Two-time reigning NL Cy Young Award winner deGrom was sharp in his spring training debut, giving up a hit and striking out two in three innings. The 31-year-old right-hander retired the side on seven pitches in his first inning and his fastball touched 98 mph. Edwin Diaz worked a clean inning of relief and Justin Wilson struck out the side in his inning of work.



GREGORY BUL/AP

Los Angeles Angels outfielder Jo Adell, picked 10th overall in the 2017 draft, played 21 games in Triple-A last season and hit .321. He doesn't turn 21 until April 8.

# New Angel in the outfield: Adell's prospects growing

By THERESA SMITH

Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — A sprint down the line and a laser throw home hinted at the promise of Jo Adell. Two strikeouts against veteran Colorado Rockies pitchers on Sunday underscored the learning curve the Los Angeles Angels' top prospect embraces.

"I'm just working hard every day to try and play in the big leagues anywhere I can," said the 6-foot-3, 215-pound right-handed hitter.

Picked 10th overall in the 2017 draft, Adell has a combined .273 batting average with a .351 on-base percentage and .444 slugging percentage in three minor league seasons. He played 21 games in Triple-A last season and hit .321.

In his second spring training, he is soaking up the wisdom from veteran outfielders, including three-time AL MVP Mike Trout.

"With Trout and a lot of the guys who are veteran players, you watch and you learn and you try to pick up on things they do well and try to add them to your own

**‘Whether it is running, hitting, hitting with power, the whole defensive gig, he’s got it all going on and he’s really young.’**

Joe Maddon

Angels manager on prospect Jo Adell

game," Adell said. "That's what I've gotten out of the past two years being in camp with these guys."

New Angels manager Joe Maddon is pleased with the progress of a youngster who won't turn 21 until next month.

"Whether it is running, hitting, hitting with power, the whole defensive gig, he's got it all going on and he's really young," Maddon said. "When you look at him, you don't realize that. He's 20? Maybe 21? He's going to keep getting better. He's really eager. He wants to learn. He's got a lot of great qualities. The sky's the limit, absolutely."

In his first at-bat Sunday, against German Marquez, Adell took a high fastball, whiffed on a slider, took a slider in the dirt,

fouled back a 97 mph fastball and was frozen on an 87 mph slider for a called strike three.

Next time up, Adell swung and missed at two curveballs while striking out against right-handed veteran Wade Davis. Adell grounded out to third base on the first pitch of his final at-bat and his blazing speed was evident as he got down the line.

In the fifth, Adell made a catch in right field and fired home, nearly cutting down Chris Owings, who had tagged up from third.

A natural leadoff hitter. In Sunday's split squad game, a 6-3 loss to the Rockies, he batted third.

"Every position in the lineup has its own tasks," Adell said. "It is pretty cool to bounce around and try to figure that out."

Reporters at the news briefing were required to wear masks, although Saito and Murai did not wear masks. They also shook hands afterward.

The Japanese government has indicated it sees the next couple of weeks as crucial to containing the spread of COVID-19, which began in China late last year.

The virus has sickened more than 89,000 people worldwide, mostly in China, but also Italy, Iran and South Korea. Japan has about a dozen deaths and about 1,000 cases.

# With season in doubt, Japanese baseball taps virus experts

By YURI KAGEYAMA

Associated Press

TOKYO — The opening of the Japanese baseball season is in doubt because of the outbreak of the new virus, officials said Monday, as the nation's baseball and soccer leagues tapped three medical experts as advisers.

Baseball commissioner Atsushi Saito said protecting fans, players and coaches was critical. Preseason games are being played in empty stadiums, with a hope the

regular season can begin as scheduled on March 20.

But Saito acknowledged assessing whether the regular season can open — with or without fans — is a delicate decision, noting the virus outbreak wasn't expected to subside soon.

"That is the difficult part," Saito said. "At this point, we still can't say what action we will take under what conditions."

The J.League soccer competition joined Nippon Professional Baseball in forming the panel to assess the virus outbreak. The

panel, to be up and running by Tuesday, will include representatives from each of the 12 professional baseball clubs, as well as J-League representatives. It will come up with recommendations by the middle of this month, officials said.

The J-League had begun, but has suspended play. It hopes to resume on March 18. J-League chairman Mitsuru Murai said matches attract crowds and unexpected problems.

"We must realize we have a responsibility for people's health," Murai said.

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL

## Top 25 roundup

## Hot-shooting St. John's sinks No. 10 Creighton

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Greg Williams Jr. made seven three-pointers and scored a career-high 21 points as St. John's routed No. 10 Creighton 91-71 on Sunday.

Kasheem Dunn had 19 points, a career-high 10 assists and six rebounds for the Red Storm (15-14, 4-12 Big East), who stopped a three-game skid. LJ Figueroa added 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Julian Champagnie scored 13.

One of the worst three-point shooting teams in the country, St. John's went a season-best 14-for-22 from long range in its biggest victory under first-year coach Mike Anderson. It was the school's first win over a top-10 team at Carnesecca Arena on campus since beating Bernard King and No. 7 Tennessee in December 1975.

"St. John's was terrific," Creighton coach Greg McDermott said. "When you get outscored by 30 on the three-point line in somebody else's building, it's hard to win."

Over the years, St. John's has played many of its big-time games at Madison Square Garden.

Damien Jefferson equaled a career best with 20 points and Ty-Shon Alexander scored 19 for the Bluejays (22-7, 11-5), who had

won five straight and nine of 10. Creighton had been captured its first Big East title by winning its final three regular-season games, but now needs help after falling two games behind first-place Seton Hall with two to play.

**No. 11 Louisville 68, Virginia Tech 52:** Jordan Nwora had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and the host Cardinals beat the Hokies to move into first place in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Louisville (24-6, 15-4 ACC) rebounded from last week's loss at No. 6 Florida State and took a half-game lead over the Seminoles, who swept the season series and hold the tiebreaker with two games to play. Louisville has one game remaining, at third-place Virginia on Saturday.

Jalen Cone scored 15 points off the bench and Nahiem Alleyne had 12 for Virginia Tech (15-14, 6-12), which lost its fourth in a row and ninth in 10 games.

**No. 23 Ohio State 77, No. 19 Michigan 63:** Duane Washington Jr. tied a career high with 20 points and the Buckeyes surged late to beat the visiting Wolverines.

CJ Walker had 15 points, and brothers Andre and Kaleb Wesson each added 14 for Ohio State (20-9, 10-8 Big Ten). The Buckeyes have won three straight and eight of their last 10.

Ohio State swept the season series against rival Michigan.

Franz Wagner had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Wolverines (19-10, 10-8). They lost their second straight after winning five in a row.

**Stanford 72, No. 21 Colorado 64:** Bryce Wills scored 19 points, including a key layup in the final minute, and the host Cardinal beat the Buffaloes.

Oscar da Silva added 16 points, and Deajon Davis and Tyrell Terry each had 12 for the Cardinal (20-9, 10-7 Pac-12), who won their fourth straight.

Tyler Bey scored 17 points to lead the Buffaloes (21-9, 10-7), who lost a third consecutive game for the first time this season. McKinley Wright had 13 points and 11 rebounds.

**No. 25 Houston 68, Cincinnati 55:** Marcus Sasser scored 21 points, Nate Hinton had 16 and Houston beat Cincinnati.

Sasser, who scored 12 points in the second half, shot 8-for-16, including 5-for-12 on threes. Caleb Mills added 15 points for Houston (22-7, 12-4 American Athletic Conference), which shot 36%.

The Cougars moved back into a tie atop the American with Tulsa, one game ahead of Cincinnati (18-10, 11-5).

The Scott had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Bearcats.



KATHY WILLEMS/AP

Red Storm guard Greg Williams Jr. shoots a wide open three-pointer as Bluejays guard Denzel Mahoney, left, reacts during the second half of Sunday's game in New York. Williams led all scorers with 21 points, including seven threes, as St. John's upset Creighton 91-71.

## Gain: Longhorns, Friars among teams on the rise entering tournament season

## FROM BACK PAGE

113 tournament projections, appearing in 83 mock brackets for the 68-team field ahead of home games against Xavier and DePaul to close the regular season.

"They're definitely an NCAA Tournament team," Villanova coach Jay Wright said after Saturday's loss.

The Longhorns (18-11, 8-8 Big 12) lack the same certainty, yet they've at least put themselves back in contention entering Tuesday's trip to fellow bubble team Oklahoma.

Texas earned Quadrant 1 wins against No. 20 West Virginia and No. 22 Texas Tech in the past week, and has no resume-wounding losses in lower-tier Quadrant 3 or Quadrant 4 games. That has helped the Longhorns climb from No. 71 in the NET in late January to No. 58.

They appear in only two tournament projections on BracketMatrix while ESPN and NBC Sports each listed them among the top eight teams on the wrong side of the bubble.

Still, it's a better spot than a month ago.

## Rising

**East Tennessee State:** Patrick Good's late three-pointer to beat Western Carolina on Saturday helped the Buccaneers (27-4, 16-2 Southern Conference, No. 41 NET) earn the league's regular-season title outright. The Southern Conference has never



BRAD TOLLEFSON/AP

Texas coach Shaka Smart celebrates with his team during the second half of Saturday's game against Texas Tech. The Longhorns have won four straight.

had an at-large bid, though ETSU — which beat 20-win LSU on the road — has a shot if it stumbles in the league tournament.

**Richmond:** The Spiders (22-7, 12-4 Atlantic 10, No. 48 NET) have won seven of eight since the start of February.

**UCLA:** Mick Cronin's Bruins (19-11, 12-5 Pac-12) are just 75th in the NET. But they're 6-6 against Quadrant 1 opponents and have won seven straight, the last being Saturday's second win this season against Arizona (11th in NET).

**Virginia:** The reigning national champions looked shaky as of mid-January, but the Cavaliers (21-7, 13-5 Atlantic Coast Conference, No. 51 NET) have won six straight and nine of 10 to look on firm footing. Saturday's win against seventh-ranked Duke is Virginia's best of the season.

## Sliding

**Arkansas:** A great start through mid-January has fizzled for the Razorbacks (18-11, 6-10 Southeastern Conference, No. 46 NET), whose loss to Georgia on Saturday was their sixth in eight games.

**Notre Dame:** The Fighting Irish (18-11, 9-9 Atlantic Coast Conference, No. 57 NET) looked like a longshot, and that was before Saturday's loss at Wake Forest (13-15, 6-12).

**Purdue:** The Boilermakers (15-14, 8-10 Big Ten, No. 34 NET) beat Indiana on Thursday, but that followed four straight losses to Quadrant 1 opponents to miss big chances to help their resume.

**Rutgers:** The push to return to the NCAAs for the first time since 1991 has hit a snag for the Scarlet Knights (18-11, 9-9 Big Ten, No. 35 NET), who have lost three straight entering March for an uncertain future.

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## SPORTS



**Back on track?**  
Capitals end season-worst  
four-game road skid » **Page 19**

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL



LAURENCE KESTERSON/AP

Providence's Kalif Young is embraced by teammate Emmitt Holt after the Friars knocked off No. 12 Villanova 58-54 Saturday in Philadelphia. After five straight wins against AP Top 25 teams, Providence now sits at No. 44 in the NCAA's NET rankings.

# NET gain

Providence, Texas  
climbing rankings

BY AARON BEARD  
Associated Press

**P**rovidence and Texas are headed into March with wins, momentum and improving résumés for the NCAA Tournament.

The Friars and Longhorns have spent significant stretches looking little like teams that would earn a bid. But they have each won four straight games, the last coming Saturday on the road against a ranked opponent. And they've been climbing the NCAA's NET rankings since late January.

**'It's late in the season — we're playing for our lives.'**

**Ed Cooley**  
Providence  
head coach

"It's late in the season — we're playing for our lives," Providence coach Ed Cooley said after Saturday's win at 12th-ranked Villanova, saying his team was "as desperate as anybody could possibly imagine."

The Friars (17-12, 10-6 Big East) suffered Quadrant 3 losses to Northwestern, Penn and College of Charleston in November. They stood at No. 146 in the mid-December debut of the season NET rankings and 80th after a Jan. 25 home loss to Villanova left them at 11-10.

But Providence claimed six Quadrant 1 wins to top their résumé in February, including five straight wins against AP Top 25 teams, and now sit at No. 44 in the NET. As of midday Sunday, Providence looked to be on the right side of the bubble as a No. 11 seed in BracketMatrix.com's average of

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■ No. 10 Creighton sunk by St. John's three-point barrage, Page 23

Scouting combine's 'speed week' wraps up » NFL, Page 18



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